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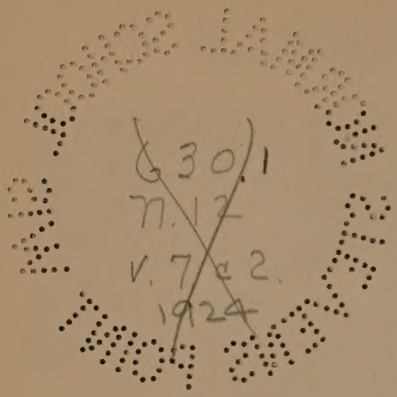
RELIGION IN COUNTRY LIFE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SEVENTH NATIONAL COUNTRY LIFE CONFERENCE

Columbus, Ohio.

1924

PUBLISHED BY
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
FOR THE
AMERICAN COUNTRY LIFE ASSOCIATION
HENRY ISRAEL, *Executive Secretary*
1849 Grand Central Terminal Bldg.
New York City



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Published May, 1925

Composed and Printed by
J. J. Little & Ives Company
New York, U. S. A.

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1925

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RELIGION IN COUNTRY LIFE

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

A CHALLENGE TO THE CHRISTIAN FARMER

KENYON L. BUTTERFIELD
President, Michigan Agricultural College

The American farmers are not yet over their distress. Indeed it is probable that they face as difficult problems as they have ever faced. But it is important to note that the farm problem is being approached in a new way. For example, it is now recognized that the farm question does not stand out as an isolated thing, but is intimately related to the major interests of other groups. We now see that from the larger economic point of view the farm question is an affair of securing a food supply. A food supply in an industrial age is a fundamental matter, and one that gives rise to a long list of questions that have only begun to be considered—such as, What does the world want in the way of food? Where can it best be obtained? How can it best be distributed? How can the tiller of the soil get access to the land under the best conditions? How can farm labor compete with industrial labor? These are all relatively new questions, in the sense that while they have been looming up as possibilities on the horizon it is only now that they are regarded as pressing, vital issues, and as parts of a great whole.

Curiously enough, even with these important and difficult questions crowding upon us, there is a growing conviction that after all life *is* more than meat, and that the real problems of mankind have to do with the quality of human life; with the possibilities of, and incentives to, human development; with the chance for people to live together in a crowded world as they ought to live.

It is true that the great war was a terrific blow to our religious ideas. The faith of millions was undermined. There has undoubtedly been a loosening of idealism and even of morals. Nevertheless I believe we are on the eve of a true religious revival. For there

is an increasing determination to put the spirit of Jesus into all economic and political affairs. There is a growing conviction that while we desire and expect to have a continually higher standard of living, the great abiding and pressing needs are for a higher standard of life.

It must not be supposed that the new religious revival is proceeding on lines of morality alone or of emotion only. On the contrary, its leadership is distinctly conscious that this industrial struggle and all these puzzling economic questions must be worked out in the light of the religious idea. If we cannot infuse an industrial age with the spirit of religion, we can have no real religion. So we find that farmers as well as others have an increasingly keen appreciation of the necessity of applying the spirit of fellowship which Jesus exemplified, to industry, to business, to politics, to racial relations, to all world problems.

This conference, therefore, has before it the most important theme that farmers can discuss. Religion is either the most fundamental, the most vital, the most practical human interest, or it is a delusion, a superstition, and of no consequence except historically. The time has come to take religion either much more or much less seriously. For us of the western world, the teachings of Jesus are either applicable to every type of personal and social problem of the present age, or they are the theoretical abstractions of a mere dreamer.

At the outset, it is to be hoped we may agree to differentiate between religion and the church. This remark is not intended to belittle the church, though it is intended to magnify religion. The church is the greatest vehicle for religion that has been thus far instituted; but it is not the only vehicle for religion. For it is eternally true that unless religion permeates and transfuses all human activities, and all associations of mankind, it can have but a partial sway. In that event the world is left only partly Christian. We should discuss the country church at this conference as frankly and as fully as possible, since it is our main reliance for rural Christianization, for making farm life religious. But the real theme of the conference is religion, the religion of Jesus, as it may and should apply to the farmers and their life and work.

May we not also try to find if we can a common basis or statement of what applied religion is? For this purpose I quote from a recent document. This statement may not be adequate, and it

is not presented on the assumption that you will immediately agree to it or indeed that it is intended for debate. But it is the careful statement of a high-minded church group which is endeavoring to dig down to the fundamental idea of religion applied to all parts of our individual and collective life.

"The Social Creed of the Churches is an attempt to point out certain consequences which would follow for our social life if we were to take Jesus in earnest and make his social and spiritual ideals our test for community as well as for individual life. It insists on a strengthening and deepening of the inner personal relationship of the individual with God, and a recognition of his obligation and duty to society. This is crystallized in the two commandments of Jesus: 'Love thy God and love thy neighbor.' It involves the recognition of the sacredness of life, the supreme worth of each single personality, and our common membership in one another—the brotherhood of all. In short, it means creative activity in co-operation with our fellow human beings, and with God, in the every day life of society and in the development of a new and better world social order."

This statement has for its core the thought of taking Jesus in earnest, of interpreting his teaching as it applies to our personal and social life, of trying to infuse his spirit, and his attitude toward God and toward man, into every individual life and into all the relationships of all people.

But we have dwelt long enough upon general principles; let us come to grips with our real problem.

What *is* the present day challenge to the American Christian farmer? It is threefold. First, to try to make agriculture and country life Christian; second, to help make all parts of our American life Christian; and third, to organize an aggressive campaign of activity and education for the purpose of forwarding these two main ends.

I. *The purpose to make agriculture and country life Christian.*

Nobody will deny that we would have a Christian civilization if all individuals were truly Christian; so nobody will object to the statement that we would have a Christian rural civilization if all farmers were truly Christian. But after all, that does not tell the entire story, for modern civilization demands that large groups of

people shall work together, and play together, and in general learn to live together. To do all this in the Christian fashion is not just the simple question of each man believing in the Christian religion, or even in each one trying to live the Christian life himself. In other words, no longer can any one of us be a Christian by himself; we must be Christian together. In fact, almost the most unchristian thing is for an individual to take no interest in the question whether his community is Christian, or whether his country is Christian, or whether other peoples are Christian.

I wonder what the answer of each of you would be to the question, —what must we have or what must we do in order to have a Christian agriculture and country life? I do not hope to answer this question in a way that anybody would regard as complete or final, but wish to suggest a few considerations that seem highly important, because we simply must begin to consider most carefully a Christian program for American rural life. So I am going to quote a statement from a suggested social creed of the churches and ask you to discuss among yourselves whether this after all represents the fundamental things in a Christian rural civilization.

1. "That the farmer shall have access to the land he works, on such terms as will ensure him personal freedom and economic encouragement, while society is amply protected by efficient production and conservation of fertility.

2. "That the cost of market distribution from farmer to consumer shall be cut to the lowest possible terms, both farmers and consumers sharing in these economies.

3. "That there shall be every encouragement to the organization of farmers for economic ends, particularly for coöperative sales and purchases.

4. "That an efficient system of both vocational and general education of youths and adults living on farms shall be available.

5. "That special efforts shall be made to ensure the farmer adequate social institutions, including the church, the school, the library, means of recreation, good local government, and particularly the best possible farm home.

6. "That there shall be a widespread development of organized rural communities, thoroughly democratic, completely coöperative, and possessed with the spirit of the common welfare."

Doubtless many of you would add other items to this list. But it at least illustrates the principles that the first term in a Christian

program for agriculture is to ensure the farmer a chance—a chance to work and a chance to grow.

It is a righteous thing for the farmer to attempt to convince himself as well as the whole world of his significance as a member of society. This is not a matter of undue self-assertiveness. It is not a question of comparisons with other classes, so much as it is a consciousness that in the very economy of things the farmer plays a fundamental part, and that in the development toward the more ideal world of men, he also must progress and grow if the world is to be what it ought to be. Farmers constitute nearly two-thirds of the people of the world.

It should be added that in any program for making the world Christian, the centuries-long emphasis upon the development of the Christian spirit *within* the man must be forever in the background. It is inconceivable that we can have a social program satisfying from the Christian point of view, without having Christians whose inner lives are essentially religious. We need both the inner life of religion and the outer life of religion. The most important requirements of modern life are two—prayer and fellowship. By prayer, I am thinking of that form of prayer which constitutes real communion with God; and by fellowship I am thinking, of course, of bringing into all the relations of life the spirit of the square deal, of social justice, of comradeship, in other words, the spirit of love and brotherhood. All this is but another way of stating the ancient laws of love toward God and of love toward man.

II. *To help make all life Christian.*

The struggle for rights is a legitimate thing and a Christian thing. If the chance for a full life is the most sacred thing in the world, it is surely legitimate to endeavor to secure the conditions under which that development can take place. But after all, the great Christian word is not rights but duties. Not duties in the sense of obligations to do something that we do not want to do, but duties in the sense of a leaping forward in the eagerness to fulfill our loving obligations to our fellows. If the farmers of America really have the Christian point of view, they must face their obligations toward other groups and other peoples. May I mention a few of these duties that seem fundamentally important?

1. First of all is the farmer's duty to use his land in the best

interests of society; which means that he will get all he can out of each acre and still keep the soil in such condition that it will not only produce permanently, but within reason will produce continuously larger crops, and thus the fertility will be increased rather than decreased. This is hard saying in a time when we are in a period of apparent overproduction, but the principle holds. The farmer is a trustee of the soil. This soil belongs to society as a whole. Nobody has a right, farmers or anybody else, to use land to the detriment of society.

2. The farmer should seek to understand and to coöperate with all other groups in our economic and social life and perhaps particularly with the wage earners. I am not thinking of the political effect of such an understanding, nor do I want to see farmers and wage earners unite merely to fight the capitalist. But I regret that the attitude of many farmers toward labor is one of an antagonism perhaps sharper and more critical than it has ever been before. Doubtless labor is partly to blame. But what is the Christian thing? Why the Christian thing surely is to seek to arrive at an understanding. If the Christian wage earner and the Christian farmer could sit down together and discuss their common duties to each other and to society at large, I am sure that these antagonisms would fade into the light of a better day.

3. Another aspect of Christian duty on the part of our farmers is to help to allay national and racial prejudice. Probably here too the condition is more discouraging than it has been before certainly since the Civil War—and it is about the most unchristian aspect of our American life. National and racial differences and prejudices are probably ingrained in the human heart, but they are bad just the same, thoroughly, everlastingly bad. The most significant thing in the parable of the Good Samaritan is not that the man who fell among thieves was finally given assistance, but that the man who gave the assistance was of a hated and despised race. When shall we learn the parable?

4. The Christian farmers of America should assert themselves toward helping to bring about better international coöperation, not primarily because they want European markets but because they want to do the Christian thing by other peoples. The International Institute of Agriculture is at present the greatest and the only clearing house we have for agricultural internationalism, but it is not being used sufficiently by our American farmers. I believe the day is

not very far distant when our American farmers will think in terms of their common interests with the farmers, as well as with all the people, of other countries.

You can see that my mind is constantly running toward the idea that while it is legitimate and necessary for the farmers to seek their own interests, it is even more important that they shall mobilize all their intellectual and moral power for a better world. I am not sure that it could be proved that in the long run an individual or a group that constantly seeks the larger interests of other individuals and other groups, secures at least a sufficient reward in terms of personal or class benefit. At any rate, the Christian principle seems to be clearly that of constantly seeking the common good.

III. *How shall we organize an aggressive campaign for Christianizing American agriculture and for mobilizing the Christian spirit of the American farmer on behalf of other groups and other peoples?*

Surely good intentions are not enough. Perhaps what I suggest is not enough.

1. In the first place, let us make the country church all it ought to be. And what ought it to be? It ought to be a community-minded church, one that is far more concerned in making the whole community in which it is located completely Christian than it is in any other one thing, and certainly far more interested in the community than it is in itself. It means a minimizing of denominational distinctions and denominational rivalries; it means magnifying service both to the individual in developing an inner life of Christian peace and joy, and to community development on Christian lines.

2. We may put a larger measure of the Christian spirit and purpose into our farmers' organizations. True coöperation, for example, is an essentially Christian thing. It ought not to be difficult to make the coöperative movement essentially religious.

3. Even in this day of committees and commissions I should like to see a national Commission on a Christian program for agriculture. This program should approach the question from every angle—that of the community, of the organization, of the nation, and that of farmers of the world.

4. Such a commission should also undertake to establish a plan

of local rural community development under religious leadership. Unless the local rural community is made Christian it is difficult if not impossible to make American country life Christian.

5. Then I should like to see a School of Religion established as an auxiliary to each agricultural college in America for such purposes as the following:

1. Making accessible religious education for all students—general in character and given as a phase of an all-around education.

2. Emphasizing the character building aspect of every subject taught.

3. Leadership of the country church movement on a community basis.

4. The training of country clergymen and other rural leaders of the professional type, either distinctively religious workers or "social" workers needing a strong content of religious training for their service.

5. The training of religious lay-workers—Sunday School teachers, lay-preachers, etc.

All these "programs" are chiefly suggestive, illustrative, rather than final. They are intended to stimulate both thought and action with reference to the three main contentions already advanced, that we shall all help in trying to make country life truly religious, to mobilize farmers for the purpose of making all life everywhere in the world, also religious, and to seek ways and means of achieving these ends.

There is an attitude that I hope may prevail in this conference, for there is one condition essential to the Christianizing of the rural social order or any other, namely, that the scientist and the religionist shall come together in their thinking. The religionist ought to be a true scientist, for the scientist simply seeks to discover the truth about the universe, the physical universe and the universe of men. It is difficult to conceive of a true scientist failing to become religious. Before we can make the largest possible progress in developing full rounded religious men and women we must reconcile, or at least we must cease to have an antagonism between, the fact and power of religion on the one hand and of science on the other. We must try to arrive at explanations of religion in terms of our best human thinking. Meantime, however, we ought to agree on what constitutes

real religion even if we may not agree on what constitutes the true explanations of religion.

All that has been said constitutes a challenge to the Christian layman, the Christian farmer, beyond anything else that has ever happened. Some will say, why not a challenge to the Christian church? Very true. But we cannot depend alone upon church officials, nor church machinery, nor even the preachers to make our life Christian. If the laymen, the great masses of men and women, are not Christian, our country is not Christian; or if they are only half Christian, our country will be half Christian. We need leadership, of course, and the greatest and best leadership we have ever had in this matter of religion and the farm. We need clear thinking, wide vision. We need prophets—perhaps the greatest prophets we have ever had. But after all the whole matter comes back to the farmers themselves. It is this challenge to the Christian farmer to make farm life, farm work Christian, and to help make America and the world Christian, that I have tried to lay upon your hearts to-night.

SUNDAY MORNING

AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

Opening Session

The Sunday morning session was called to order by the Secretary, Henry Israel. The invocation was offered by Father Edwin V. O'Hara, of Eugene, Oregon.

Plan for the Discussion

Secretary Israel: Perhaps just a word ought to be said about the method that we have adopted. There have been a great many suggestions made as to how best we can get at this matter. We have had programs arranged. We started early in January, having announced the topic, and with an Advisory Committee organized a program that was quite elaborate. As we progressed, there were various expressions voiced from different sections of the country and from various interested parties. We came to feel after all that with such a widely scattered area and so many interests in the Country Life Association, the whole matter would be best served if instead of setting up a program, the brains and the heart power and the devotion in service, represented by the leadership in the Association could get together and find a way out coöperatively through discussing these questions together. Of course, we need direction, we need help, and counsel and guidance, so that we may know how and when and where to go. So we were successful in securing the assistance of Professor Harrison Elliott, who has had some experience along these lines with large gatherings at Indianapolis, at Vassar College, and at other places, to come with us even at a late date, with two of his associates, Mr. Joseph Chassell and Mr. Goodwin Watson. I am, therefore, glad to introduce to you in this informal way one whom I have learned to love as I have worked with him

many years, one we know as "Sunny" Elliott, Professor Harrison Elliott, of Union Theological Seminary.

THE PLAN OF THE CONVENTION

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: My function, as some of you who have been meeting in the preliminary conference of leaders know, and as Mr. Israel has well said, is solely that of director or chairman of discussions. The purpose is to secure just as far as possible the suggestions, the thinking, the experience of those present. It has been suggested that I explain the process that we are planning to follow.

Determination of Problems

The general topic, Religion in Country Life, will not be discussed effectively in this convention unless we first isolate the more puzzling questions to which we wish to give attention. You are all aware from your own experience or from the addresses of the opening session last evening that there are situations in the country that you would like to see improved and on which you wish to get help. So we plan to give the time this morning in trying to locate the situations in the country which give you concern from the viewpoint of religion and to discover the problems and difficulties and questions that you yourselves have, on which you would like help at this convention. In short, the syllabus for the rest of the discussions is going to be made out of the discussions of this morning, in order that the questions which you want handled shall be the questions which shall be discussed. We know in general that the topic is "Religious Life in the Country," but to what aspects of that topic you most wish to give attention is what we wish now to know. You can realize that in a three- or four-day Convention we cannot settle everything regarding religious life in the country and that we shall therefore need to narrow the area of our discussion. The Program Committee might have determined that narrowing of area in advance of this Convention, but they decided to wait to see who would be here, so that we should be as sure as possible that the Convention would meet the needs you feel. Therefore, when we break up into groups this morning a little later, we are going to try to get from every person in this Convention what he or she feels are the situations most needing attention, and the questions on which help is most needed. When you go into the groups later, will you be ready to describe

very briefly situations in country life, so far as the church or religion in the country is concerned, which seem to you puzzling, to which you would like to see some attention given in this Convention; and then determine why they are difficult, how they are concerning you and where the problems really are?

Proposals for Solution

We are hoping to go from that step to a second step in this Convention, namely, to proposals for solution of these problems. For instance, we have already had in the addresses some suggestions. One comes to my mind immediately. Bishop McConnell last night, on the problem of personnel, said, "You would solve it if you would raise the salaries, and you never can solve it until the salaries are raised."

There is represented in this Convention any amount of suggestion and experience and thought that we want to pool here. We want to make it available. As I said in the editorial in the Bulletin, ordinarily you go to the Convention and you get the experience of six or eight or ten people in the addresses. We want here to get the best experience of all the people who are here, and that means that we hope to release the experience of scores of people and make it available for everyone.

We shall find that people differ as to the best solutions of these different problems. Some persons will believe in one and some in another solution. We are going to try to get out into the open, why some persons feel this is the way it can be best done, and why some other people feel another way is better, all in the very frankest, most earnest and thorough-going fashion of working together. That means that nobody is going to try to keep back anything he thinks or anything that he believes. But you can see that it also means we must be just as eager to hear what the other man or woman thinks, as we are eager to say what we think. We shall seek to avoid having argument. But we want thorough-going discussion and fundamental thinking. Each person will feel free to contribute the very best he has; but he will also feel obligated to try to understand the viewpoint of the person with whom he differs. We shall see if out of it all there is something at which we can arrive of real service to religion in the country.

I think we shall find those differences will be partly differences of fact. We have found some of them already. Some say that

attendance on the church services is declining. Others say, "No, it is declining in the country, but they are going to church in town, and there are more people going to church than before." Now, that is a question of fact. It is a question of finding out what the facts are. But we shall probably find real differences on the basis of opinion or judgment, or point of view. Here is where we shall want to come to understand one another.

Reaching Conclusions

We are hoping that there may come out of this Convention some conclusions. They will not be binding on any organization or any person. But as a result of these discussions we hope we can say, "Yes, we really believe that this proposal is a good one," and on this proposal, "We are divided as to whether it is a proposal that is good or not." That is, we shall work back and forth, not for abstract decisions, but for determination of actual ways of acting.

I wonder if we make it clear. We shall not deal in generalities in the Convention. That is, we are not going to deal with general points of view, but we shall try to consider real proposals for action and decision. Our participation will take this specific form: "We believe this and this and that is worth while, because." Of course our "because," our reason will always represent our point of view, our conviction. There will however be no effort made to see to it that people accept any particular opinion or that they assent to opinions on which they do not really agree. If on Tuesday afternoon we find that this Convention represents three points of view, had we not better frankly recognize that and go out to experiment and get further light upon the problem? If we find we are united on some points, but we disagree on others, we shall recognize this in the summaries and we can disagree in the finest fellowship and go out for further experimentation. We have no illusions that in a three-day Convention we shall solve all of these questions and become a fully united group. But if we can understand the issues better, if we can achieve some progress, if we can understand one another better, if we can go away in a spirit of fellowship, all united for country life, then it seems to me it will be worth while.

Responsibility for Action

In the third section of this Convention, we shall divide on the closing day by special responsibilities. Some of us are particularly

interested in theological education, and some of us in the country church, and some of us in certain farm organizations and so on. If we come to any conclusion that we all unite upon, it is going to make a difference in the way we conduct the country church, or what we do in our farm organizations. So we are hoping that the third section of the Convention will be division by these special responsibilities. The questions will be these: "Do we really believe that the solutions proposed are practicable for the particular organization where our responsibility lies? What steps would be necessary to put these solutions into effect? What do we propose to do in the special responsibilities we have to put these proposals into practice?" In this way, instead of contenting ourselves with general suggestions, we hope to come to some real program before the Convention is over.

The procedure then will be in general as follows:

SUNDAY (to-day)—Description of situations giving concern and determination of problems to be discussed.

MONDAY—Proposals for Solution—

Real reasons each is advocated

Consideration of differences of fact and opinion

Conclusions with reasons for same or recognition of differences of conclusion.

TUESDAY—Ways and Means—

Division by types of responsibility to consider ways and means of putting proposals agreed upon into effect.

May I make one other suggestion? Some of you will become a little impatient to-day, because you will say: "I know what my problems are; why don't you go to the solution of them? Why waste the day trying to understand the issues?" If we are going to work together, it will be necessary that we come to some common problems. Otherwise, there will be no way of working together. And if we are going to come to understand one another, it will be necessary that we understand each problem as the other person looks at it. So we are spending to-day trying really to analyze the situation and get at the issues, first, because we shall need to get to some common questions that we are going to attack or it will not be possible in a Convention of this sort to get anywhere, and again, because the solution depends in part on seeing the problem as the other man sees it.

We feel also, that if we can really illuminate the problem, if we

can come to understand it better, that may be fifty per cent of the solution. If you will be patient to-day—I think you will enjoy it—but if you will be patient about trying to find out what these problems are, and working with the leaders this morning in helping us to know on what you want to find a way out, I think we shall get along further to-morrow than we should otherwise.

There is this last very small suggestion. You probably have been frequently in Conventions where you thought you had to make a long speech because it was the only opportunity you would have to say what you had to say. This is going to be a little conversational group, in which we shall sit around informally, in which we expect you to take part over and over again, talking to the immediate point, and saving the rest of your speech until the time when it will be useful a little later. Don't let the issue that comes up start a long speech that you feel very keenly about, but which is not immediately on the point. Before the Convention is over you will have plenty of opportunity to say what you have to say. In short, we shall be in much the situation that you would be with a group of friends in a room. Nobody would start in and make a long speech saying everything he expected to say all the rest of the evening. We are going to have these little informal groups in about ten places in the Hotel, where you can sit in a little semi-circle and discuss the matter.

We shall meet now by groups for the next forty-five minutes, 9:00-9:45, and then we shall assemble here again in a general meeting to try to bring together the results of these group meetings so that we may be able to put into the work as we go along the contribution of every person here.

DIVISION INTO GROUPS

At this point, Mr. Goodwin Watson announced the meeting places and leaders of the various groups. A recorder was appointed for each group to keep notes of the discussion to report at the general session and for the summary of situations. The leaders and recorders of the groups were as follows:—

Group I. R. S. Adams, leader; Miss Talitha Gerlach, recorder.
Group II. Le Roy Ramsdell, leader; R. C. White, recorder.
Group III. O. F. Jordan, 1st leader, Miss Maude Fowler, 2nd leader; W. L. Airheart, recorder.
Group IV. E. L. Morgan, leader; E. C. Paustian, recorder.

Group V. W. J. Campbell, leader; R. A. Killburn, recorder.
Group VI. C. C. Taylor, leader; C. E. Lively, recorder.
Group VII. A. B. Doggett, Jr., leader; Ralph Felton, recorder.
Group VIII. D. Sanderson, leader; Mary E. Samson, recorder.
Group IX. Malcolm Dana, leader; J. M. Artman, recorder.
Group X. Walter Burr, leader; A. Z. Mann, recorder.

The Convention then met by groups for the next forty-five minutes. Each group was fairly representative of the various interests and concerns and points of view found among the delegates. This was secured by a random assignment of delegates to the various groups.

In order to secure from each group a description of the situations in the country in relation to religion which gave the delegates in that group concern, the following questions formed the basis of the discussion:

What situations in relation to religion in country life give you concern?

Describe each briefly, indicating why it is of concern and what the problem really is?

REPORTS ON DISCUSSIONS OF SITUATIONS GIVING CONCERN

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Our business in the few minutes we have left this morning is to try to see if we can determine in a preliminary fashion, what are the most crucial, the most serious questions or situations to which you would like to give attention. We shall have a meeting of the recorders and the leaders immediately at the close of this session, to gather together the record of what happened in the individual groups, so that all of the suggestions that were made there will be gone over quite carefully later to-day in making out the syllabus for to-morrow. But it will be a decided help if from each group, very rapidly, we can get this information. Will the recorder and the leader and the members of each group be ready to share with us the results of the discussions? Was there any situation that was described in your group, that seemed to you typical of what is going on and indicated where the problem really is? Or were there two or three just alike that were typical, so that instead of dealing with an exceptional problem or an exceptional situation, we may deal with one, which will mean help in a great number of communities, and on a great many aspects of country life? What situations were described that seemed so serious that, unless something is done, religion is going to be harmed? What

problems are so immediate that they must be given attention or no progress on religion in the country can be made?

What situations, and what issues, which, judging by the discussion secured a response, indicating that they were felt the most keenly by the group?

General questions apart from brief description of the situation are not nearly so useful in handling the matter as a brief description of the type of situation, and then the question that may go along with it.

Now, may we hear from these groups?

As each group reported Chairman Elliott placed a summary phrase or sentence on the blackboard. The introductory statement below in bold-faced type represents this blackboard summary for each item and the amplification which follows is the gist of each report as given.

SITUATIONS REPORTED AS CAUSING CONCERN

1. **City mecca of success; pulling out leadership.** "General psychological situation manifest among preachers, teachers and farmers that city is mecca of success, thus drawing toward the urban center country people. . . . Lack of sense of importance of the country community." (Reported from Group 9 by Professor Artman.)
2. **Village churches do not reach country people.** Miss Patten cited "town in southern Michigan where three village churches were active and the largest village church had only four country members. . . . The country women said they were nearer that village than any other, but no one ever paid any attention to them." (Reported from Group 2, by Professor White.)
3. **How introduce progress among conservative groups.** "The group that was mentioned was the Pennsylvania German. Such progress as the every-member canvass, publicity and religious education. Reference was made to certain denominational groupings." (Reported from Group 7, by Professor Felton.)
4. **Leadership willing to stay; but moved by person who was overhead.** Situation "where preachers had been trained for rural leadership and had been obliged to move to city situations because of overhead organization, the officers of the church over and above the pastors compelling them to move." (Reported from Group 6, by Mr. Killburn.)
5. **Parish 10 miles long and 4 wide; religious education of children of parish.** Pastor from this parish wished to know how to establish forms of religious education. Mr. Huston, the pastor, said that his was the only church in the community and that it was very hard to reach the children because of means of travel and because the parents were in the dairy business. (Reported from Group 8, by Miss Samson.)
6. **Sparsely settled areas—How get adequate ministry?** "In sparsely

settled areas and in detached communities too small to support a church, how are you going to get an adequate religious ministration into these homes and into the community?" (Reported from Group 1, by Mr. Adams.)

7. **Conception of what function of church and religion is. Relation of Gospel message to economics and agriculture. In Group 9, a number reported being in communities "where the conception of the real function of the church and what religion really is hampers the entire work of the church. . . . No one in the church, minister or people, seems to know what the genuine function of the church is or what religion is. Therefore, the church existing in the community is not of the community nor doing anything really to help the community." (Reported by Professor Artman.)

"In Group 4 the point was brought out that one of the greatest difficulties all of them had was relating the gospel message to the problems which the farmer faces, economic and agricultural. He sees no relation whatever between the message he hears from the pulpit and the every day problems that he meets." (Reported by Professor Hewitt.)

8. **Community Church.** Group 3 reported that it had given special attention to the community church ideal and had listed difficulties to be met, as follows:

a. Competing institutions within the local community.
b. Churches kept apart because of local prejudices.
c. Overhead interference, either a pastor coming in to capitalize the community ideal for an individual denominational church or the overhead preventing a consolidation where it is desired locally.
d. Financial problems.
e. Disintegration of the old community and the integration of the new.
f. Young people's problems, including the throwing of social life outside the church and the defective religious ideal.
g. Week-day schools.
h. Conserving and increasing spiritual ideals.
i. The missionary problem.
j. A regard for the church attachments of the elderly people. (Reported by Mr. Airheart.)

*9. **Unskilled minister cannot do the job.** There is also a failure to de-develop local leadership. (Reported from Group 8, by Professor Sanderson.)

*10. **Getting religion over into conduct: unacquainted with current thought; ignorance of child psychology; failure to recognize normal groupings.** Group 6 reported conditions giving concern as follows:

a. The technique of presenting religion and getting it over into conduct. Those presenting religion cannot translate religious teachings into everyday conduct.
b. Religion is presented by people unacquainted with current thought.
c. Religion presented by people unacquainted with child psychology.

d. Lack of knowledge of normal groupings in the community, as for instance in case of the young people. The Y. M. C. A. man spoke of going into a school and getting boys to write down the names of their companions and thereby readily finding out the normal groupings outside of school. The church has not an understanding of these. (Reported by Professor Lively.)

11. **Inability of church to measure up to spiritual quality of community. Farm bureau big turn-out; church not patronized. Church spiritually a laggard.** Doctor Jordan reported this emphasis from Group 3 and Mr. Wilson gave two instances where the church is "spiritually a laggard, behind the spiritual tone of the time and the community: one a highly churched community where they preach dissension and hatred and the other a church with 75% of the church membership of the community where the pastor is teaching hatred of another class of Americans."

* 12. **Consolidated school; activities in school taking away people.** (Reported from Group 2, by Mr. Ramsdell.)

A discussion followed which resulted in the starring of items 9, 10, and 12, as important, and the double starring of item 7, as especially important.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON

A SURVEY OF THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

General Session

The Conference was called to order at three o'clock by Secretary Israel and the invocation was offered by Rev. B. F. Lamb, Secretary of the Ohio Council of Churches.

Chairman Elliott: May I call your attention, at the beginning of the afternoon session, to the fact that we are still working together in an attempt to find what are the real situations and issues on which you feel help must be given during this Convention? Therefore, to-day will have much of a negative character. It will reveal the places where we are not able to make good, where we do not know what to do. If any of you have found help on these difficulties out of your experience, it will be a contribution we shall want you to make to-morrow. Since the session this morning, as a result of a meeting of the leaders and recorders, we have attempted to summarize the material in five or six or seven common types of situations. We have attempted to group it according to the focus of the difficulty and concern. We have taken the various suggestions from the group meetings and arranged them according to the centers of difficulty so that we can get at them more effectively.

SUMMARY OF TYPES OF SITUATIONS

A. A good community in which things as a whole are going well. Honest, trustworthy people. Four churches, two or more declining, but one fairly good. Not enough money or sense of stewardship to support them all. Churches seem to have fallen behind the pace of the coöperative community spirit represented in Grange, consolidated schools, etc. The young people

* In the light of additional suggestions, some modifications were made in the summary as reported by Professor Elliott on Sunday afternoon. The summary as re-arranged was then mimeographed and distributed to the delegates on Monday morning. The modified summary is printed here.

seek their social life outside of the church. Business activities, hauling milk, etc., interfere with the church schedule of meetings.

B. An excellent community in which some people are getting their spiritual values, enthusiasms, and social vision in organizations outside of the church. Organized religion is conservative and unable to measure up to the spiritual quality of the community. The church does not appreciate nor utilize the extra-ecclesiastical spiritual reality and dynamic.

C. A community in which the church fails to evaluate, set, and interpret economic goals. Coöperative marketing association sets profit as its sole aim, and ignores social and ethical values. The church does not enter in.

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D. Denominational churches in the community are preserved because of local denominational loyalties and prejudices, or by means of overhead pressure and subsidies. Decisions as to policy are voted in far away conferences and conventions. Preachers who want to stay are led by overhead forces to move elsewhere. The situation is controlled by officialdom through missionary money. The local minister is backed by the overhead because he makes the denomination dominant. The community is exploited for the sake of the denomination.

E. Local denominational loyalties develop dissension and hatred in the community. There is a lack of community pride on the part of the churches, and an unwillingness to see things from other than a denominational point of view. There is no program based upon community needs. The young people get the denominational divisions and jealousies rather than real Christianity or even ethical ideas. In some such situations a minister sometimes is trying to heal these divisions but is not backed by his church. He endeavors to promote community activity, but outside forces interfere.

F. Denominational or other churches in the community give an exclusively devotional emphasis. What they promote is unrelated to social and economic needs. The individual members may or may not be participating in parallel community enterprises. The church preaching and worship is not related to these activities. The church contributes little or nothing, directly, to law enforcement, economic progress, or scientific agriculture.

The minister here is not trained for the country. He appears to have no knowledge of economic processes and organizations.

Sometimes in extreme form this split between religion and the rest of life takes the form of "out-law" sects, Holy Jumpers, etc. Religion for them is in the realm of magic rather than social welfare.

G. The community is progressive. Many agencies are at work and the community is interested in them and willing to support them so far as possible. These agencies, however, see things each from its own viewpoint. They step on each other's toes. Churches, schools, Y. M. C. A., Y. W. C. A., Scouts, Clubs, social agencies, and economic organizations all compete for time and money. How many ought a community to support? Can they work together without duplication or interference?—These are the questions faced.

H. A community church or other strong church takes hold of community enterprises and tries to monopolize them. While the church may be strong, it

makes a slight impression on existing community needs. The minister tries to act as chairman of all social work committees. What the church cannot control, it, like a dog in the manger, tries to keep out. Religious life is interpreted in terms of church activities.

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I. The church is inefficient.

(1) Perhaps a "scrub preacher." Less than half the rural ministers have high school education or equivalent. "I like to go to church but I can't stand the preaching." Minister may lack ability, or may be merely untrained.

(2) Efforts at evangelism through traditional channels are unsuccessful.

(3) Religious education is grossly inadequate. See Indiana Survey. Teachers are unacquainted with modern psychology, knowledge of groupings, etc., and lack the technique for getting religion to become effective in conduct.

(4) Equipment is inadequate.

(5) Church organization is unsatisfactory. The church is "run" by the minister who tries to do it all himself, or by a small group of elderly people who monopolize affairs.

J. "The church is so much better than most of these described that I suppose I ought to go home thankful." Good live community. One strong church with denominational connections. Community a unit in many activities. What shall be done? "We are ready to go ahead; where do we go?"

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K. Community practically unchurched. Some have three little churches with services every few weeks.

Village churches do not cover country. Rural group not interested in village churches.

Community may be sparsely settled. May be declining in virility of stock.

Community may be completely untouched, as in lumber regions, pioneer territory, coal fields, etc.

L. Community composed mostly of tenant farmers. Church has no policy regarding tenant-landlord relations. No interest in improving the situation of the tenants.

M. Migratory situation. Immigrant farmers. Foreign groups neglected. The diverse cultural and religious backgrounds cannot be met by the same kind of worship or activities.

There ran through all these situations two problems that seemed to recur in practically every one of them, namely, in the country frequently the city seemed the Mecca, and there was a consequent lack of appreciation on the part of country people of country life and its significance. That applied to the young people who wanted to go to town; it applied to the minister who wanted to go to the city church; it was a problem running all through this. Second, the tendency in the country, as well as in town, to be loyal to certain groups. If we were reared one way we are conservative. If we happen to go to a different school or a different community we would

have a different outlook. There is a difference in loyalty between the young and the old. The tendency is to be emotionally influenced by the particular type of living or organization with which we have been associated, and to feel that something is being lost if we do not hold that loyalty intact.

Might I say two things before the program of the afternoon? It seems as we have been working together that we are learning that it is possible to be entirely frank about situations without in any sense attempting to doubt the integrity or the loyalty or the religion or anything else of people of different views. We can disagree about what to do in situations without feeling that we have disagreements as individuals. That is the thing which I believe this Convention is going to show, that a person who looks at a thing exactly opposite from me may be just as religious, may be just as honest, may have just as good a mind, may be just as good a Christian, but he is looking at it in a different way. I have something to learn from him and he has something to learn from me. But I shall not learn anything from him and he will not learn anything from me if I am so everlastingly polite that I do not tell him what I believe about the situation, and the way it is being handled. I believe this spirit is to characterize this Convention each day, namely, that we can talk frankly in the finest spirit of brotherhood and this will make for progress.

Now, there is one other element in this. You can feel it already. To me it is the essence of worship. There is one thing that binds us all together and lifts us above any and all petty interests. We all love the country and we want the country to develop in the way that God wants it to develop. That bond of union means that we do want to have contributed to this Convention the best thinking of every person, that the country may go forward. That is above any private interest in this group. Just as soon as you bring into any Convention or into a group something that lifts them above this private interest and places them on a plane of worship, then you have accomplished something worth while. That has been true of this session from the beginning and it will be true of it from beginning to end. It invites frankness, it invites brotherhood. There is a feeling that you are unfair to the other person and to the country if you do not speak frankly trying to help solve these problems that are baffling us.

One question has been passed on to the program committee which

did not come out into the open this morning and which we are going to ask, on behalf of the program committee, to have presented this afternoon. We want Doctor Carl Taylor of North Carolina to say just a word about a group of people, some of whom are here and some of whom are not here, who would want to read into this question of the situation of the country certain elements to which we did not have time to come this morning. Doctor Carl Taylor, will you say a word for us?

SPIRITUAL POSSIBILITIES IN RURAL ECONOMIC LIFE

MR. TAYLOR: You have heard what has been said about a feeling that a few points going into the making up of issues have been lost sight of in the shuffle of bringing out issues this morning. I do not want the Convention to get the notion that some of us protested and that Professor Elliott said, "All right, you get up and talk," for that is not the way I was asked to be here. I was asked to come on to express what the Convention leaders felt were viewpoints of a number of people.

There are spiritual elements in all dynamic activity due to one of two things, either sheer buoyancy of life itself, or the definite recognition of clear goals which lend zest to activity. Wherever you find life really on its toes, red-blooded, you are going to have a spiritual element. Wherever you find either temporary or long time goals, you are going to have people working with zest. I am saying that there are spiritual elements in all dynamic activities. The church or even religion in its customary aspects, has no monopoly on the spirit of a people.

In the world's history great spiritual movements like the Renaissance, the growth of science and art, have refused to be killed. They have often been handicapped and sometimes stultified by organized religion and crystallized religious concepts, notwithstanding the fact that the very spiritual essence, this buoyancy of them, these goals they were striving to attain, have driven them forward in spite of the stultifying influences, not of religion I am saying, but of crystallized religion and customary religious institutions.

We have such movements to-day and always they are grabbing off and utilizing the vitality, the buoyancy of life, and creating zest for life, and lives in individuals and in communities by setting clear cut goals.

One of these is capitalism. I am not speaking invidiously. I am speaking of that body of phenomena and fact which has such clearly recognized goals to attain, such definite values with which to measure attainment, that men strive mightily and with great zest and with great aspiration in getting hold of those things.

The labor organization or the labor movement is another illustration of the same thing, in which there is great spiritual dynamic and goals, clear cut goals, tremendous loyalty to those goals, enthusiastic loyalty to them, consequently developing spiritual life.

Farmers' organizations in the rural districts to-day are of the same species. Our great coöperative movements, however, may be only temporary. Nevertheless they have clear-cut goals, into which the red-blooded life of farm people, seeking to aspire to something which is attainable, is going. They are tremendously loyal and enthusiastic about those things. Other agencies and other programs, even so transient and so temporary and so little important things, as some of you might say, as Women's Clubs and Fraternal Organizations, capture, utilize and develop the spiritual element, as well as striking fire with some of these elements when the churches fail to do it.

These dynamics and zests will not down. They cannot be catalogued. They should and must be encouraged and directed. They arise from life itself. They set for life, inspirations and aspirations. They will not down. They cannot be catalogued I say in institutional activities nor completely reached by the operation of agencies or institutions. They must be encouraged and directed.

The topic of this Conference is what it is, because it is seeking to discover and magnify these things. The topic is not "The church" but "religion." The topic is not necessarily or should not be "Defined religion" "Deductively defined religion," but the living, dynamic, buoyant, spiritual life and processes of country people. We are interested in and concerned about life and living; not in the church as such, but in the country; not in any agency, but in men and women, boys and girls, the communities and the world.

Our concern about agencies is only a concern about the development, direction and utilization of the heart of all life, namely, its spiritual elements.

We have two outstanding alternates to follow in the discussion of the subject before us or in the solution of the problem before us when that problem is clearly defined. First, organizing church and

religion so as to give the maximum expression and wisest direction of these spiritual facts and processes which are in the life of people who live in the country; or second, putting our energies into all movements and agencies, others as well as the church and religion, which will insure the maximum development and wisest direction of life in the country.

My conclusion is this, that above everything else we must not allow this Conference to be lost in the discussion of church technology, church administration or even church personnel, to the sacrifice of the religion and spiritual life of people who live in the country.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: You will note that Doctor Taylor has spoken of persons in enterprises outside of the church seeming to secure spiritual values in their loyalty to and enthusiasm for these enterprises, and says that part of our problem is how to utilize all of these spiritual processes of country life. You will want to determine how far you wish to go with him in his suggestion that we should make religion the basis of our discussion rather than the agencies of religion, such as the church. Thus far your discussions have been in terms of the organized expression of religion, which may be the best way to handle it. But this will be for you to decide.

The next paper is a further analysis, the analysis of a person whom we all love and admire, of the problem of rural religion. I am sure that you share with us who are leaders of the Conference, the regret that Professor E. C. Lindeman cannot be here in person and that he should be ill at this time and not able to come. But we are also glad that he has sent his paper, and that he will be here in genuine contribution to the Conference, and, for those of us who know him, in actual and spiritual fellowship, as we hear his paper read by Mr. LeRoy Ramsdell. The topic is "Religion and Rural Culture."

RELIGION AND RURAL CULTURE

By PROFESSOR E. C. LINDEMAN

I am one of those who continues to believe that "all cities draw their power from the country. . . . The country is the soil from which the cities renew themselves; it is the spring that feeds them, the root from which they flower. Cities grow and perish; the country is eternal." And as the years pass by, leaving their deep-

ening furrows upon my mind, I come more and more to feel that the essence of creative power lies very near the center of what has ordinarily been called religious aspiration. But I have fears for religion! I observe a narrow professionalism among the clergy and it appears to me that the pale procession of the saints grows paler year by year. There is something seamy in the methods by which religious organizations propagate their faiths, and religion tries as best it can to burst forth from its medieval cloisters and face life as it has to be lived by the common man. All of this is to me a part of the unspun floss which, for want of a better name, is called culture. There can be no good life that is not also beautiful.

These are among the thoughts which have served as the seed-bed for my essay entitled "Religion and Rural Culture." I cannot hope that you will all care for the flowers which have resulted from this seeding, but I do most fervently hope that you will not hastily discard them as weeds.

Where can religion function in the evolving adjustments of a rural culture? In attempting to reply to this query, attention will be directed to a selected list of adjustments which does not in any sense aim at completeness.

Socio-Economic Adjustment Involved in Coöperative Marketing

A. It has already been intimated that real culture has its roots in the necessary activities and relations of human beings. Eventually these necessary activities precipitate an economic problem. So far as agricultural economics is concerned, there is now apparent agreement that the farmer must set up coöperative processes if he is not to be the victim of external exploitation. The rapidity with which coöperative marketing has won favor in this country since the war, and the absence of opposition are both astonishing and alarming. The American farmer is now likely to accept the principle and practice of coöperative marketing in precisely the same manner in which he has accepted the manure-spreader, the Ford car, and the Delco lighting outfit, *i.e.*, as an external adjustment. But the coöperative process is one which deals with unknowns; it involves both inner and outer adjustments to life. It is an assumption that the economic life may be so ordered as to permit the production of good commodities to be sold at a reasonable price. It is a further assumption that everybody engaged in the business either as producer or expert is coöperatively honest. In fact, the coöperative movement is one of the most far-reaching and audacious assumptions ever made about life. Farmers are entering upon this new way of life with much the same spirit revealed when they "take a chance" on a cheap automobile at an auction sale. They continue to think of the coöperative marketing association as something external to themselves. In many cases this attitude is of course traceable to the leaders and experts now in control of the movement. There has been and still is a firm

conviction among many of these leaders that marketing farm products either coöperatively or through middlemen is a purely technical problem for experts. They seek to bind the individual member to his new collectivity by means of a legal contract. The fundamental ethics which stands as a foundation to the movement is the ethics of legal force and coercion. One cannot avoid the conclusion that this movement under its present technique may succeed. It may bring to the farmer an increased proportion of the money spent by consumers for his products and thereby bring economic success to both the farmers who are members and those who are non-members. But one cannot escape the second conclusion, namely, that this movement, even if it does succeed materially, will not, unless its technique is altered, make a wholesome contribution to American rural culture. From the religious point of view, the coöperative movement can never become ethically and psychologically successful until it becomes unnecessary to enforce a legal contract. The assumption that human behavior may reach levels where one farmer will not betray his fellow-producer is an empty assumption so long as legal compulsion remains in the background as an explanation of integrity. Religious ethics begins where legal ethics leaves off. The second mile, not the first, is the test of religious behavior.

Cultural Development without Cultural Leadership

B. Rural leadership in the United States is on the whole incompatible with a thorough-going process of cultural development. Its impact upon rural people is overwhelmingly materialistic, prosaic, dull and uninspiring. As a prerequisite to a cultural renaissance, may I propose that a movement be inaugurated to send an expedition to study agricultural methods in Siberia and that the personnel of the expedition be composed of 90% of the deans of agriculture in the agricultural colleges, 85% of the directors of extension, 80% of the agricultural agents or farm demonstrators, 50% of home demonstration agents and boys' and girls' club leaders, and a like number of "bosses" and office-holders in farm organizations. As a corollary to this proposal and while the expedition is *in absentia*, it might also be beneficial if the United States Department of Agriculture could be reorganized into a school of rehabilitation or re-education for miseducated specialists. One of the obvious objections to the above suggestion is the effect which the proposed expedition might have upon Siberians. In this connection one can only hope for the best.

Returning to a more serious mood, is it not startling that the American farmer retains so much of idealism and cultural hunger? His tutors, and of all elements of our population, the farmer is the most-tutored, are uniformly persons who have been trained to view life through the lens of some technical specialty. They are seldom persons who see life as a whole. The impact which these leaders

make upon the farmer is always specific. They see the farmer in relation to hogs or alfalfa, but they almost never see hogs and alfalfa in relation to the total personality of the farmer. One would naturally think that so much teaching on behalf of economic and technical factors in agriculture would have long since made farmers successful, but he is indeed a bold observer who views contemporary agriculture with optimism. What these leaders fail to see is that progress is general and not specific; that one sector of life pushed too far in advance throws the entire line out of adjustment. While they are busily engaged in improving or attempting to improve material factors, other equally integral factors are neglected so that in the end rural culture becomes an unstable, unsatisfying mode of life.

The above contention is frequently answered with the statement that schools, churches and societies of various types must supply the cultural needs, but where are these institutions to secure their moral and pecuniary support so long as official leaders lock themselves within their air-tight compartments? Sadly enough most of the influential leaders included in the above category are persons who do not reside in or participate in rural life. They live in cities and merely circulate through the country as peripatetic experts. If I may be permitted another factious reference, they are for the most part infected with the foot-and-mouth disease: one sees them usually in the act of making a speech or running to catch a train. (As an extension worker I was myself thoroughly infected for four years, and three years of living in a rural community have not yet been sufficient to immunize me completely.)

Reference will again be made to the problem of leadership and as a conclusion to this section it may be enough to affirm that if refining influence of religion and culture is to play a creative part in rural life, serious attention must be given to the quality of rural leaders. Witness for example the pitiful rôle which the rural press has played in connection with the proposed constitutional amendment to grant to Congress the power to regulate child labor. Only two editors of farm papers have thus far spoken in favor of this amendment. Those who have written editorials against it have falsified the issue; they have attempted to lead their readers to believe that the amendment is itself a statute law and that if it were passed, Congress would thereby begin to interfere with the labor of children on farms. I have interviewed three editors of farm journals, all of whom believe personally in the justness of the amendment, but none of whom dares to say so in his paper. I do not know whether the rural churches as units are rising to higher humanistic levels on this occasion but I do know that the Federal Council of Churches has waged an energetic campaign on behalf of the amendment. Plenty of self-styled rural leaders are ready to be spokesmen for the farmer's dollar but one must search far and wide to discover a rural leader who will frankly strive for those things which dollars cannot buy. If bread is what the American farmer lives for, he is well supplied

with leaders who are interested in bread; if he still feels the need of the bread of life, his plight is pitiable indeed.

The Church's Need of Techniques for Influencing Human Behavior

C. The affairs of life which stand most in need of the purifying impulse of religion are those in which human purposes are found to be in opposition. Life becomes hard, brutalized and negative when frictions between human beings and groups of human beings remain unresolved. Nothing creative, nothing fine, nothing pure can emerge from a community dominated by petty jealousies, conflicting purposes and cumulative hatreds. There can be no wholehearted enlistment in an engaging culture until a method is devised for making peace on earth and good will among men a reality instead of a pious wish. We are now confronted with a problem which constitutes one of the chief barriers to the development of rural culture and which belongs peculiarly to religion. Religion, particularly the Christian religion, has traditionally presumed to have something to say concerning the ways of peace and harmony. This is not the place to discuss in detail just what it is that religion has to say but rather how it says what it presumes to have to say. Stated in question form, *what means has the church devised for influencing human behavior?* Are the techniques which the church uses susceptible of general application? Do the methods for influencing behavior used by the church tend to weave themselves into the community's social process? In short, do the techniques for influencing human behavior used by the church contribute to a progressive culture?

Preaching, teaching and worshipping as the means, with conversion as the end, represent both the method and the purpose of ordinary church function. So far as the rural church is concerned, the most important function is preaching. In fact, in many localities the church service is still referred to as the "preaching." Conversion, the decision to embrace religion permanently as a way of life, is expected as a product of preaching. Perhaps the one outstanding contribution to religious psychology which the Protestant churches have made is that which finds its concentrated expression in Billy Sunday and his fellow evangelists, exhorters, revivalists. They possess a technique for influencing human behavior, a technique which is so thoroughly perfected that they can guarantee in advance the number of converts to be anticipated in a given community. And they do on the grand scale what the resident pastor attempts to do in his humble way. The most successful revivalists cannot, of course, remain long in a single community; no community could permanently maintain the emotional pressure essential for their purposes. An evangelist must perforce remain somewhat external to his clientele.

Is preaching a valid method for exerting wholesome influence upon the behavior of human beings? The answer, in view of those portions of modern psychology where substantial agreement may be found, must be an unmistakable negative. Preaching is not only

inadequate, but as currently practiced it is a pernicious inhibition to more valid methods of changing conduct. A distinct anomaly exists in the relation between the preacher and the congregation. The preacher expounds the truth but religious truth cannot be expounded; it must be discovered. The preacher seeks for the truth in history but religious truth must forever be a projection into the future. The preacher creates through strange terminology and sensual intonations an atmosphere of abnormality which separates him from his congregation; the atmosphere of unreality produced in the church cannot be reproduced in field, farm and home on the morrow. The preacher carries on a one-sided encounter; he talks *at* his congregation and even if he does portray valid religious experiences, members of the audience have no opportunity of matching these with their own. (The rapidly declining prayer-meeting was, of course, an effort to provide for a give-and-take exchange of religious experience, but it degenerated into a competition among a few saints to determine who could tell the same story oftenest and with least variation, or who could relate the most unbelievable experience. In the end it became fully as unreal as the preaching service and consequently could not endure. While it lasted it was one of the interesting varieties of religious experiences and constituted at least one of the reasons for believing in the motives of Protestantism.)

Preaching, if it is to be continued at all as a central technique of the church, will need to be revamped both in regard to method and content. If the Kingdom of God is within us, it cannot be in the preacher; that is to say, we must produce its sanction in our personalities and so long as the preacher stands a bit elevated as expounder, exhorter, lawgiver, just so long will he be regarded as authority. But if the Kingdom is within us, so likewise must its sanction and authority be within us. Perhaps what I am trying to say has been expressed more meaningfully in the Negro spiritual which is sung:

> It's me, it's me, it's me, O Lord
> Standin' in the need of prayer.
> 'Taint the preacher, 'taint the preacher,
> But it's me, O Lord
> Standin' in the need of prayer.
> It's me, it's me, O Lord
> Standin' in the need of prayer.

Religion will remain external so long as a priestly caste, within which religious experiences are differentiated from those of the mass of people, exists. The tyranny of external authority is the barrier which stands in the way of spiritual freedom. Whatever symbolizes this authority, be it bishop, superintendent, preacher, elder, deacon or janitor, must be dissolved and transformed before well-meaning Christians can discover the inner means for well-doing. One of the

reasons for the increase of police-power in the state is the fact that people have abandoned personal responsibilities toward law, and by the same token, one of the reasons for the existence of so many preachers is the fact that individuals have shifted the responsibility of spiritual discovery from themselves to clerical employees. This simplifies the problem—in fact, it simplifies it into extinction. There is no longer a pertinent religious problem after all attendant religious activities have been duly and vicariously delegated. From thence onward religion may be confined within the walls of a none too hygienic building where one may go once each week for attenuated inoculations.

Three situations of adjustment have been mentioned: (a) socio-economic adjustment involved in the coöperative marketing movement, (b) adjustments connected with a group reaching out after cultural development but bereft of cultural leadership, and (c) the adjustments within the institution of the church which have to do with techniques of affecting human behavior. These may not seem to be the most significant adjustments which rural groups need to make in order to build a pathway toward cultural solidarity, and they obviously do not include an adequate number of adjustments. My original notes contained suggestions for eight adjustments but it soon became patent that all of these could not be treated in a single essay. Those which are included merely happen to be the ones which interest me most and which appear to me to be excellent points of departure for practical programs. Something can be done in relation to each of the adjustments proposed above. My task has been largely that of the impresario who brings his dramatis personae to the stage; what happens to them after that will be a combination of their resources and the mood of their audiences. As the person who assumes the responsibility of presenting the problems, I do owe it to you to state in my conclusion the faith which is in me.

Available Techniques for Meeting the Problems

I believe that there are techniques for making the above adjustments which are satisfactorily scientific and which at the same time leave room for the higher reaches of unpredictable spiritual experiences. May I briefly suggest at least the direction of these techniques in the hope that your ensuing discussions will reveal the content.

1. Economic movements, such as coöperative marketing, will not defeat their own ends as specialized organizations if they once give recognition to the fact that man behaves as a total personality. They will then begin to see that the coöperative movement bears a relation to social, to psychological and to religious processes. As leaders they will then be in position to align coöperative marketing with a truly cultural development.

2. Leaders who close their eyes to the whole nature of man will always prosecute specialized interests at the expense of total progress. They will keep rural culture continuously in a jumble of unequal, one-sided evolutions and devolutions. If the present tendency, the elevation of economic leaders, continues, there will of course be no possibility of creating a rural culture in America. Even if these leaders could produce prosperity for farmers, they would be unable to build rural communities in which evolving needs of life could be adequately met. They could not be nuclei of culture since they have built up habits of life which exclude cultural and humanistic interest.

3. The most promising avenue of escape from narrow and increasingly false leadership is to set up methods which will permit rural groups to act intelligently upon decisions arrived at by means of their own resources. This necessitates adult education and a substitution of discussion and exchange of experience for sermons, speeches and external forms of authority. It constitutes a democratic effort to put experts, preachers, editors and leaders in their proper place within the formula of actual experience. As scholars, students and persons with special gifts to bring to the ongoing life of rural peoples, the experts should be "on tap but never on top."

4. In some manner any group which aims to be something more than a cog in our economic machine must learn how to keep inner resources on a par with external activities. Every new invention should become the starting-point for the release of energies to be used on non-economic levels. Only in this way will it be possible to create an adequate spiritual dynamic to keep *things* in their subordinate places.

5. The creation of resources of spiritual dynamic is a process which must go on in small groups. Dynamic results from purposes matched with adequate means for fulfillment and the bringing together of purposes with their proper means is a clinical, an experimental procedure in which only small numbers may participate at first. For my part, I should prefer ten such small clinical groups experimenting with Christian hypotheses to one hundred churches where the Christian assumptions have degenerated into verbalism.

6. Modern adjustments come more and more to be adjustments of groups rather than of individuals. This is now no less true of farmers than of urban dwellers. All of us in the modern world find our places through group allegiances which represent our dominant interests. At the same time it must not be forgotten that the individual human organism is the adjusting mechanism. Groups and institutions are merely means toward individual fulfillment. Once this fact is grasped it will become easier to enlist right-minded per-

sons in purposes rather than institutions. When the institution is considered to be the end as well as the means, energies and loyalties which might have gone to the development of more effective means are devoted to the perpetuation of fictitious ends.

These, in abbreviated form, are some of the directions which seem to me to lead toward creative adjustments. If I have utilized a less-optimistic tone in my analysis of the problem of religion and rural culture, it has been for the purpose of rendering the problems more challenging. Underneath much that is in appearance either harshly facetious or dejected, a hope not entirely deferred persists. I have faith in the possibilities of a rural culture in which the lustre of religious aspirations shall glorify the humblest acts of man. And I believe that "as the art of life is learned, it will be found at last that all lovely things are also necessary."

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: We are to have in the next two brief papers further discussions of the place of organized religion, and again from two points of view.

We shall first hear from Professor Walter Burr, Professor of Sociology in Kansas State Agricultural College at Manhattan, Kansas, on "What is the matter with the rural church?"

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH THE RURAL CHURCH?

By PROFESSOR WALTER BURR

The Rural Church is a Failure. There is no need to recount the results of the many surveys that have been made from every angle of approach. They all tell the same story: "THE RURAL CHURCH IS A FAILURE!" We subsidize certain demonstrational fields and then go out and tell the world! But the world knows *that* is not the rural church. The world knows *that* is just a thing dressed up for show purposes. We have read from a recent report that more than thirty thousand rural churches in America are pastorless. We have read of the inroads made upon whole rural sections of states, by the Holy Rollers, the Holy Jerkers, the Holy Jumpers, and the like. We have read of the thousands of rural ministers who serve the churches that still remain, and who are getting much less than living salaries. We find these ministers unable to buy books to keep up-to-date; or to send their children to high school, to say nothing of college. We find many of them hopelessly in debt to the store-keepers of the towns where they serve as pastors.

Various campaigns have been put on to give the dying rural church artificial respiration. The grotesque manikin actually jumps and kicks once in a while under especially drastic artificial treatment. But when the treatment ceases, it relaxes and goes on slowly dying.

One form of artificial treatment is the stress upon evangelism. Evangelism,—for what? Shades of Finney and Moody! Evangelism TO SAVE THE CHURCH FROM DYING! How long has it been since we heard of evangelism to save lives?

Evangelism in the Country

"What sort of community activities do you have here through the Winter?" I asked a farmer in a Kansas town. "Oh, there's plenty doing," he replied. Then he went on to tell me how the Baptists began their revival meetings early in the Fall as soon as corn was out of the way, another church started immediately after the Baptists were through, and then two others finished the season up to March when Spring work began. "And the Holy Rollers," he added, "keep theirs going all the time." What a continuous spree for rural folks! No wonder that the educated self-respecting ones are big enough to stay out above it all. But if the rural church is dominated by that sort of thing in the interest of denominational competition, then the self-respecting folks must leave it alone. I suggested to a denominationally crazed farmer that a preacher who peddled a sermon to them occasionally might give them better service if he were educated for his work. "Law me!" he exclaimed. "He don't need no education. Why last Sunday he preached down at the church and they wa'n't nary a dry eye in the house. He don't need no education." On the other hand, I asked a farmer who is a college graduate, "Did you attend the service at the church last Sunday?" He replied, "I should say not. Why should I go and hear a man who doesn't know as much as I do of the things he talks about?"

Tell me how an institution that has over thirty thousand empty plants, and the rest of them working at a dying rate while they emphasize everything except the things that are essential to rural life, can hope to guide the world into the new era.

Very well, then if evangelism will not prove the rabbit's foot that will bring good luck to the dying church, let us go together and buy advertising space in a lot of papers, and put on a "go to church" campaign. Let's sell the idea that everyone ought to go to church, and shame them into it, and then there will be plenty of people for all the churches. It's dollars to doughnuts *that* won't work either.

Denominationalism

What is the matter with the rural church? No, please don't suggest another survey to find out. I have a friend in a mining camp in Colorado who isn't over-inclined to work. When I would say to him, "Let's go to work and get this done," he would reply, "Now, what's your hurry? Let's sit down and talk about it a while." The rural church survey has come to be only a temporary stay of execu-

tion. We all know what's the matter with the rural church. Asinine denominationalism!

I have had town preachers of Methodist, Baptist, Congregational, United Brethren, Presbyterian Churches—and certain other of the 57 varieties, recount to me their grief on account of this fact. In a recent rural ministers' conference where a number of denominations were represented, every preacher in attendance came to me privately and asked me to help him get out of the rural ministry because of the hopeless denominational strife that was on. I have on my desk now a letter received just the other day from a man who has his M.A. degree aside from his Seminary training, in which he says in substance, "I am appealing to you to help me get out of this grind. I should like to do the rural work, but I am everlastingly tired of being a pawn in the hands of others, to be moved around merely to fight for a denominational cause which isn't worth fighting for." Rural churches are little failing institutions because in the towns where they do exist there are too many of them. In the Middle West it is nearly always the case that where the people have one big and successful rural high school, there are from three to six failing rural churches. That a percentage of them are without preachers wouldn't be so bad, if they would STAY without preachers. But with the devil cast out, it too often happens that seven other devils find the house, if not clean, at least empty—and occupy. A divided rural church does not belong in this new day of the community movement, the unified Farm Bureau, the consolidated school, the Coöperative Association, and the like. The big word in rural life to-day is unity. Every other movement and institution is using that word—and practicing it—but the rural church.

You might say, then, that this failure of the rural church is manifestly a failure of the rural people. It is not. The rural people want a united church. Again and again I have been invited to their meetings when they have all demanded a united church. I have seen three church groups go to work together and raise an ample salary for a full-time pastor—only to have their hopes blasted by influence from the outside. I have seen other groups of churches go together by common consent in one of the buildings, where a resident pastor could be secured, only to see outside forces get busy again and suddenly send preachers into all the buildings—until the one movement had been killed, and then all the other preachers were withdrawn. From my many years' experience in rural organization I could go on *ad infinitum*, and nauseate you with instances to prove that the trouble with the rural church is not a trouble in the rural people.

Denominational Organizations and Officials

Let me point out the cause of the trouble, in one illustration from experience. I was pleading with a Superintendent of church activities in a certain district to allow us at the Agricultural College to

send letters, with his approval, to the rural ministers under his direction, to get them interested in the rural community movement. We proposed to organize community clubs on a local basis, and Farm Bureaus on a county basis. He definitely opposed the movement. I asked him to state his real reasons. He was an honest man and did so. "Is it not your purpose," he asked, "to get all the people to meet together in one place with an almost religious zeal for community welfare?" I replied that he had stated the purpose better than I could. "Then," said he, "when they had become accustomed to do that, and were enjoying it, don't you think they might say, 'Now we are all working together; let us bring our preacher here, and have just one church?' " I replied that certainly if they should do that it would be a most desirable result. "No, no!" he exclaimed. "Can't you see that one who has responsibility for and authority in a church such as ours, never could encourage a movement that might lead to that conclusion? It would destroy all of our church organization—all our denominational machinery."

The exploiter of the rural church is denominational officialdom from the outside. Our rural churches furnish a great percent of the personnel of the membership of our city churches. If I do not have churches of my denomination in all the communities of the state, then of the few thousand young people coming from the country up to my city every year, there will be very few of my denomination, and my city church cannot be strong. Many rural churches in an area, even though they are weak and struggling, will send constant human contributions to the city center toward which their lines converge. Also, there are other contributions. Even those churches that receive home missions aid, send in their financial stipends, the checks crossing each other in the mails.

Mission Aid and Denominational Rivalry

Mission aid notoriously goes to those fields where there is denominational rivalry, and is withheld from those fields where there is no such rivalry. Now I know that the employed agents of this system will arise and talk of church comity, home missions councils and the like. And yet, while they talk it, they know as men, if not as ecclesiastical secretaries, that the shame of the town and country churches is this same little subsidy doled out to struggling churches to keep up the competition. I have in our own church councils, too often heard it said, "We must put money into that field, because such and such a denomination is strong there, and we are in danger of losing our denominational integrity."

There is being enough money wasted to-day in fields where there is denominational rivalry, to maintain a strong church, with a well-paid ministry, and a good community Bible school, in every community in America. You say I do not have the figures to prove

this. Those who are leading in this work have the figures, but they never yet have shown any willingness to have them compiled for comparisons among denominations. Fred Eastman has given the figures for one denomination, and he says they are spending three million dollars annually in America, to keep up this cut-throat competition—and this, he charges, is money raised for another purpose. Fraud is a word we sometimes use for crooked bank dealings on a large scale. I heard a political speaker say that one of the big crooks exposed in the oil scandal would never be prosecuted. He explained that there are only two kinds of larceny described in the law: petty larceny and grand larceny. The punishments are specified for these. But he said, "There is a third kind of larceny for which there is no punishment. That is GLORIOUS LARCENY."

Control from Overhead

One reason that the rural people who would like to be free, cannot break this strangle-hold, is that in many cases the church property which was bought and paid for by the people of the community, belongs to a corporation outside the community. In a rural town where two churches had fought so hard, egged on by officialdom, that there had been no regular religious services for ten years, the business and professional men wanted to get possession of one of the church buildings. They proposed to introduce regular and uninterrupted religious services there, with permanent resident leadership. They authorized me to say to the immediate overhead officer of that church that they would raise a fund of money and buy the church building (for which the community had already paid once). That official replied, "I have no commission to sell church properties. We are watching that field. Some time somebody will start something there, and wake the people up, and then we can send a pastor in and take up our work there once more." Attempts have been made with varying degrees of success, in certain denominations, for officialdom to get possession of church property. Sometimes it is through a very small grant from a Church Building Society, and sometimes through sheer third degree methods. Once in possession of the property, the overhead can see to it that the corpse is at least not buried.

I have never known of a superintendent or secretary or Bishop rising in a state ecclesiastical conclave and proudly announcing that he has been able through the grace of God to discontinue a definite number of churches during that year. He, and his chosen elect would consider it a mark of failure. Yet in professional social work we do boast of killing numbers of orphan asylums, almshouses, and other such institutions of which there have been far too many.

Positive Suggestions

The remedy? It lies with officialdom. I maintain that the leaders of five of the largest denominations could start a movement, if they

wished to, at once, to make the rural church a success. One move would be, to agree to cease raising money for Porto Ricans, negroes, and the like and spending it on towns of perfectly intelligent and self-supporting white folks in America. Another would be to agree to cease granting money to churches in communities where even one evangelical church is already receiving missionary aid. This talk of the church opposing war is all bosh as long as it surreptitiously engages in war itself in rural America. The best cartoon I have ever seen of the Almighty is the one that says, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh. He shall have them in derision." The joke of the season for him must be a warring church talking about a warless world.

The next move would be to pool certain funds, and place them back of the community church, with all the denominations concerned giving such a church, fellowship and spiritual and moral aid. They would not need any other kind of aid for a very long period.

I am warning here, that all the surveys financed; all the evangelistic campaigns conducted; all the "go to church" movements launched—and any other kind of religious smoke barrage that may be thrown out to blind the people—will not for very long avail in covering over this real and gigantic wrong of unnecessary rural denominationalism maintained by district, state and national officialdom. I am here pleading with these officials either to get together and make some plan to bring unity out of this rural church chaos, or else take hands off the rural church altogether and watch how soon the rural people who run their own schools will run their own churches also, and develop the community church even as they are developing the community school.

Is it too much to ask in the name of the Christ who gave His own life for the world, that selfish personal and denominational interests be given up, in order that the rural church may function in America and in the world!

Chairman Elliott: We shall now have a second brief paper on this same problem of the rural church which was opened up by the latter part of Professor Lindeman's paper and which has now been discussed by Professor Burr. The next paper will be Rural Church Progress, by Doctor Edmund de S. Brunner, Director of the Rural Division of the Institute of Social and Religious Research.

THE NEXT DECADE IN RURAL CHURCH PROGRESS

By Edmund de S. Brunner

This fall marks the completion of the first decade and a half of the formal country life movement. It was launched in 1909 with the publication of the report of the Roosevelt Country Life Com-

mission. Roosevelt was keen to appreciate the importance of a socially healthy rural population. He realized that there was an agrarian illness in America. He knew that the break up of many civilizations had begun with the decline of their rural life even before the days when Isaiah had warned Israel that the overweening importance of Jerusalem and the consolidation of farms in the hands of absentee urban owners presaged trouble for the nation. Hence the commission.

Fifteen Years of Rural Church Progress

One of the most remarkable sections of its epoch-making report was the direct challenge which it delivered to the country church to reorganize and revitalize its ministry to the rural people. Moreover, the Church responded. The Presbyterians first, the Moravians next, the Methodists third, created departments or commissions to give attention to the rural problem. To-day there are nine denominations with one or more paid executives specializing in the needs of the town and country field. Four others give it special attention through their regular organization. These rural workers are interdenominationally organized and one department of the Institute of Social and Religious Research is devoting itself entirely to rural life. The achievements of these town and country departments have been considerable. Surveys have been undertaken and to-day there is a body of knowledge that offers the basis for formulating national policies with scientific accuracy. Demonstration parishes have been set up and America has been convinced that a way of rural church success exists. Programs once heralded are now the normal and expected thing. Some theological seminaries—and Drew the very first under the leadership of Dr. Earp—began to give specialized training for the rural field. Now about two-fifths have at least a lecture course on the subject of town and country work. To assist men already in the service summer schools of graduate training for rural ministers have been held, beginning the year following the publication of the Country Life Commission's report. Last summer there were approximately 50 such schools with an attendance of about 4,000 ministers. The result has been a complete change in the morale of the rural clergy and in the tone of public utterance about the rural church. Fifteen years ago pessimism ruled. To-day there is optimism. In 1909 discouragement and listlessness were rife. To-day there is a rising morale born of achievement. The demands of the town and country field are accorded consideration in denominational councils.

We may well take satisfaction in the progress of these fifteen years. Seldom has there been as united and whole-hearted response to a great need as the response of American Protestantism to the challenge of the country. The victory has not been easily won. There have been foes within and without and the pioneers can tell of many a battle. But I would not have you think that, given time,

the church's present rural program will solve the rural problem. Rather do I feel that the victory I have called you to celebrate is but the first in a warfare that must be long. I am rejoicing only that we have now marshaled and trained a force, outlined a campaign and tested our strength successfully in a few preliminary engagements. I am not even sure that the church has kept pace with the program in other spheres of rural social interest. In fact, I rather think it has not. Consider for a moment the general situation and the place of the church in it.

The rural tradition of Protestantism is drawn from its service to the pioneer, the man who answered the invitation of the westering sun to embrace the unknown and who in so doing brought forth the civilization of our Middle West. Solitary and intense was his life; individualistic was the gospel's message for him. Parishes were laid out on the basis of the distance he could drive and still return home before his chores called him.

Changing Churches in a Changing Country Life

To-day conditions are different. Smaller farms, more intensively cultivated, have decreased isolation. Improved roads and the automobile have annihilated distance. The mechanical revolution and the colleges of agriculture have transformed farming. Brain and machine now do the work once performed by straining human backs. Fewer people are needed for more production. Rural needs have given us a type of community unknown in the world before—the village, service station to the farmer. Paralleling the industrial has come a social revolution. Coöperative buying and selling are overcoming rural individualism. The consolidated high school has replaced the one room building of old oaken bucket days. Everywhere in rural America horizons are enlarged and enlarging.

What of the church? There are 101,000 town and country churches in this land of ours. If all of them were put into a hopper and then like oranges in a packing house assorted according to size, the most numerous group would be those churches with one or two rooms, supported by a slowly declining number of active members, never more than fifty, served by a non-resident minister, having but two organizations, an ungraded Sunday school and a Ladies' Aid, and competing for new members with several other churches, some of which would be aided in the struggle by "home mission" grants. Despite all that has been done this is the average situation and as long as denominations cling as tenaciously to their organizational glory as democratic presidential candidates cling to the votes of instructed delegates, there can be no rapid progress.

But there is another side, the one which represents the fruits of the work to which I have alluded. The best statement we have about this other side is contained in an intensive study of conspicuously successful town and country churches made by the Institute of Social and Religious Research. From 700 nominated churches 40

were selected for field investigation. In the choice due regard was paid to geographical and denominational distribution. Various typical economic backgrounds were also sought. This study tells a different story.

In these churches the time-honored circuit rider has been succeeded by the resident minister with a comfortable parsonage. In seven cases out of eight, space has been provided somewhere in the church plant for social and recreational purposes, and in two-thirds of the cases there was recreational equipment. Separate rooms for graded classes in religious education were the rule, not the exception. The moving picture machine or stereopticon was found in a majority of instances. One-half of the church schools insisted on training their teachers instead of trusting to their good will and an old-fashioned Sunday school quarterly. Evangelism there was, but of the variety that undergirded the emotional appeal with definite instruction in Christian faith and practice. There were well developed beginnings in week-day religious instruction and in daily vacation Bible schools. Finances were on a "pay as you go" instead of on a "trust in the Lord and annual oyster supper" basis. Nine out of ten ministers were paid a living wage. Democratic were these churches, most of them serving all occupational classes and such racial groups as did not have their own churches. Without exception they were found to include community service as a part of their program and to coöperate freely with other churches, if there were any, in their communities. In almost one-half of the instances there were no other churches of the same group in the field.

The study showed too that this program appealed to the people. Net growth in membership was four hundred per cent over the national average. Per capita contributions were higher by one-quarter and, most significant of all, the time investment, which by and large through the country is about two hours a month for each member, in these churches ranged from five to twelve hours a month.

The rural church then has found a way of leadership. These churches, achieving success under diverse but not exceptional conditions, prove it. The problems that remain are how to lift the average situation up to the best, and, still more difficult, how to make even more serviceable the ministry of so-called successful churches. Now that we know where we are at, what next? What are the next steps in rural church advances? *What must be the objectives in the rural church movement during this next decade that will round out our first quarter century?*

Need for Increase of Technical Knowledge

Of fundamental importance is the necessity to increase our technical knowledge. In the past we have sought to achieve knowledge through the survey method. This method will carry us further but it must be developed and intensified. To too many pastors a survey is simply a census to discover those in the community who are un-

churched. To a denominational executive a survey is simply a method of budgeting the needs of a given field in terms of men, money and equipment. Good as far as they go, neither of these studies is longer sufficient of itself. To succeed in this age of skepticism we must, for one thing, explore the mind of the man outside the church—and in town and country that means half the population over 14 years of age. To the outsider in these days the church is frankly a social institution. He grants it no divinity. The rural church must be willing to submit to the test of its right to exist as a social institution, for the outsider is testing the church on that basis whether we like it or not. The minister who has a sufficient background of social science to forget for the moment his beliefs about the church, and to justify it and its teaching on the basis of social utility, will come to a new appreciation of the social validity of the Christian way of life. He will understand too, some of the reasons why in spite of slightly increased memberships church attendance, where measured, has fallen off by one-half in the last generation. Such knowledge is needed.

We need to know too, how different customs, environments, influences, form and nurture different types of mind and how the results we desire may be accomplished. Here is a field for building up a whole new technique, one barely touched by social psychology and not at all in its rural implications. We preach idealism, we play upon the emotions, we invoke imagination to picture the results of better living, but unless we accompany these efforts with a study of actual conditions, of the laws and modes of events and of social change, the end will be illusion. Great visions can be actualized only when linked with observation, analysis, knowledge, foresight. Only so came the radio. As John Dewey says: "The separation of warm emotion and cool intelligence is the great moral tragedy." Those who in the effort to defend faith attack the scientific method, perpetuate this tragedy and handicap the Church.

In another decade the economic, social, mental, and religious factors of a community from both the structural and functional viewpoints must lie open before the mind of the minister. His knowledge must encompass their inter-relations and correlations and how they explain his field and affect his program. To illustrate, given a certain average land value, a certain crop, certain common experiences in earning a living through the processes of sowing, harvesting, marketing, and the social engineer may come to know that he cannot progress beyond a certain point until these basic experiences which affect the mold of a man's life and thought are changed. To-day we seek knowledge to enable us "to put over" our program. A decade hence we will seek knowledge to enable us to formulate a serviceable program and to build a pathway for it into the hearts of our people.

I pass on with this single addendum to my all too brief statement on our necessity for increased knowledge—I do not fear the appli-

cation of the scientific method for which I have argued to the field of human relations, including religion. I have a high faith that only by such application can we discover a technique that will enable us to work out the solution of our problems. I would not substitute knowledge for faith, hope and love, but I would have faith envisage the achievable, though it be unseen to the multitude, and not dupe me with the mockery of a heaven unobtainable. I would have my hope encompass my whole ideal but not forget the first steps possible, and thus save me from the despair of self-invited defeat. I would have my love made purposeful and the power of its emotion linked with the authority of intelligence in the task of redemption. I would make scientific knowledge the handmaiden and servant of those Christian virtues of which I, like Paul, believe love to be the greatest.

In what else I have to say, then, I simply desire to indicate the necessity for the application of new knowledge, to be quarried by much mental toil, to six of our rural problems, the solution of which must be attempted in the decade that lies ahead.

Problem of Evangelism

First, the town and country church must seriously cope with the *unsolved problem of evangelism.* Evangelism had its birth in the country, but in the country to-day the older methods of evangelism have failed to produce results. The protracted meeting can no longer serve as a substitute for a resident pastor. Useful in the days of the pioneer, the older methods no longer apply but the need for evangelism is even greater. Consider the South, where evangelism of the traditional sort is most prevalent. Here we find less than three-tenths of the rural population enrolled in churches and here too we find the highest proportion of inactive members on the books of the churches—more than one-fourth. Remember that it is the exceptional village in which more than six out of every ten persons 15 years of age and over are in the church, despite the fact that there are more churches per thousand persons in our villages than in any other type of community. Add to this the fact that the country population contiguous to the village is only half as well evangelized as the village itself. Does this look as if evangelism as at present practiced were nationally successful?

One would imagine that the rural church would enlist a larger proportion of its population than the church in the city. The facts show that the reverse is true. Whatever the reason, the city church outstrips the average rural church as at present organized. The situation has reached the crisis point in many open country localities. As work within the villages has intensified, ministers have more and more lost interest in the actual ministry to the contiguous rural area. The country dwellers and their churches have been abandoned to what Fate may have in store—usually Holy Rollerism. Facts like these, recurrent the nation over, bring us face to face with the

necessity for a reconquest of rural America with an evangelism geared to the life and thought of this century and with a statement of Christian program that, wherever it takes people, will establish contact with them on the level of their own recognized needs.

Religious Education

Religious Education is another phase of our task in which much must be done in the years ahead. The experts in this field have used the city for their laboratory. The adaptation of the new methods and principles to rural conditions is yet to be worked out. Certain it is that progress can no longer be measured by the increase in the number of cradle rolls, of scholars bringing their Bibles to Sunday school and of schools attaining star or front line positions, meritorious as such things are. The very objectives of the rural school of religious education are to be determined. Is it to teach the Bible, or character, or both? What factors enter into character building? What is the relative importance of each of these factors? Are there more effective approaches to the rural child than those now used in the city? Should the curriculum have a distinctly rural setting? How can small schools be graded and teachers trained? Or will the pooling of efforts by all the churches of a community be more effective from the point of view of religious education? How can week-day religious instruction be given and if given how can it be so imparted as to receive credits from the public schools? How can adults be reached and the outlying portions of a community? There is need for a great deal of carefully supervised experimentation in this field. There is need for courageously trying things for which no precedent exists. This calls for openmindedness to acknowledged failure and for modesty in appraising results. Why should not some strong churches take a leaf from the experience of public education and regularly transport pupils for Sunday and week-day religious instruction and for the sessions of the daily vacation Bible school. In the general advance of the town and country church as such, religious education has been largely neglected. Within the field of the administration of the local church it offers the next big opportunity for advance.

Church Buildings

The new program, even that already accepted, calls for *new buildings*. The typical one or two-room structure is the relic of the days that are going. That building served in the days when society demanded that the church but preach. The new country church building fits a new conception and is providing for three functions—worship, religious education and community service. The rooms designed for the former purpose can also be used for the latter. Beauty there should be in the structure—beauty of design, material, workmanship and decoration, but with beauty,

utility. In the coming rural church, of which there are already some examples, are rooms for the very young, a nursery perhaps for the children of mothers attending church, rooms for various age and sex group organizations, kitchens delighting the heart of the domestic engineer and serving as an example to the countryside. There is also a gymnasium-auditorium for athletics, plays, musicales and good times. Anything fit to enter into the life of the people is fit to enter into the people's church in these rural communities where school and church are so often the only institutions.

Christian Administration and Coöperation

In the fourth place the next decade will demand *Christian administration within denominations and Christian coöperation between them.* Either of these steps toward a better rural life is worthy of a whole address. There is much in our present administration of town and country churches that is counter to the spirit of Jesus. In recent years most rural communities, even including many villages, have lost in population. Old neighborhoods have died. The auto and good roads have enlarged community boundaries. The result is that parishes once separate, now overlap, even within denominations. We allow the strong village church to compete for members—usually the wealthy members—with the weak country church. We condemn ministers to fight on under these conditions, trying to keep open a church which has outlived its social usefulness, and when the battle is lost, as inevitably it must be, the loss is charged against the record of the unfortunate last incumbent. I believe it would be more Christian from every point of view if there should be a statesmanlike redistricting of our parishes to meet new conditions, an official closing of hundreds of churches and the building of strong religious organization at the center of the community with a resident pastor and perhaps an extension worker or two. This is a proposal which could not be carried out overnight, but the cost of leaving it undone is likely to be greater than the cost of doing it. The plan could be officially adopted and dignified before the people as a great forward step into which they could go with enthusiasm. Even to-day when no official pronouncements have been made, it is only fear that holds back many a denominational official from attempting just this thing in his own territory—in the last analysis fear of the year book. God pity His church! Imagine Jesus afraid of a year book, imagine Him regarding a statistical loss over against a spiritual gain.

As a part of a more Christian spirit in our church administration we need a more Christian spirit in our interdenominational relationships. True there has been much progress in these last 15 years. Here and there territory is being allocated. Here and there churches are federating or people are forming non-denominational churches.

This last is a movement we do not regard seriously. Many of these churches fail—often with the gentle help of denominational executives, but failure does not solve the problem. We cannot take a negative attitude against the insistence of people that in Christ there is no denomination. In one community nominated to the Institute of Social and Religious Research as typical of the state, by the college of agriculture and the state council of churches, 18 churches were found—one for every 80 persons. These 18 churches belonged to but nine denominations, competition being both inter- and intra-denominational. Eight of these churches have less than 25 resident members. Several were sustained by home mission aid. In communities such as these American Protestantism spends between $3,000,000 and $4,000,000 a year. And yet less than half the people in that community belong to a church. And it was nominated as typical. Is there anything Christian about a situation like that?

You have heard many a story like this. You regret that such things are. You agree that it's unfortunate. I have come to the place where I am ready to go beyond regrets. I believe that those who from whatever motive are a party to the perpetuation of such situations, especially through the granting of "missionary" funds, will some day be called to strict account. Can you imagine Jesus taking the widow's mite, given for the extension of the Kingdom of God, and spending it in a community where there were 18 churches, four of them belonging to one denomination? The time has come for those who talk the language of coöperation with their lips to practice it with their hearts. The time has come for the minister who has enough regard for the authority of the Master to hold his high priestly prayer (John 17) as a part of the precious heritage of our faith, if not to refuse to serve such churches, certainly to question by what right he is sent thither when he knows that even to-day in rural America one community out of every six has no church. God forgive us! There's a home mission field if we want one! There $3,000,000 would do some good. Yet what do we do? Recently as a part of a study still in process, the Institute of Social and Religious Research selected about 100 small agricultural villages, all having a population of about 500, for special study of some aspects of the church situation. It was found that the churches in competitive points with three, four and five churches were served largely by resident ministers trained in college and seminary and, of course, frequently aided by home mission funds. The churches in the places where each denomination had undisputed possession were served by non-resident men and largely by men untrained and poorly paid.

The next decade will see this problem of competition between the denominations and the resultant overchurching solved, or it will see an accelerated decline of the town and country church. The

laymen are aroused. The national rural leaders are ready. It is for the ministers and the less than national administrators to decide whether or not to take Jesus at face value in conducting our inter-denominational relations.

A Christian Program for the Rural Community

In the fifth place the next decade must see the working out of a *Christian program for the rural community*. This is something broader than the program for the local church. This last we have. The Christian program will deal with the large issues of rural life from the point of view of the Christian ethic. These are days of agricultural depression. The country has turned against the town and city. What is the Christian way out? What does equality of opportunity for the country child mean? What is a fair return for a crop? What sort of lease should a Christian owner offer a tenant? We have a social creed of the churches couched in industrial terms. We need a social creed for the country. It is interesting that the first attempt to formulate one comes not from a churchman but from a distinguished layman, the president of a great agricultural college, President Butterfield of Michigan. He has struck a true note and one of the next steps we must take is to work out a satisfying Christian program for the town and country community.

A Meaningful Message

Finally, the new rural church will come to its people with a *meaningful message*. The primary social utility of the church is the exercise of its spiritual functions. It is a character building institution. Because of the demand of necessity it must, like its Master, "go about doing good," but its spiritual message to the age of scientific agriculture must be designed alike to meet the level of each day's need and the need of the human soul as it faces life's greatest mysteries. In other words, it must transform the grind of labor involved in raising wheat into the satisfaction that comes from being a co-worker with God in answering the world's prayer for daily bread. It must have something to say to the man who first lifts a child of his in his protecting arms or who looks into the open grave.

The further advance of the rural church calls not for "the social program" nor for the "evangelistic program" exclusively: it calls for an all-round program interpreting the best religion of the ages in terms of the best spirit of this age.

Rural America offers a great field to the church. The pioneers in the country life movement have found the way of successful leadership and ministry. But there remains much land to be possessed. In village and on farm fifty million people wait. The next steps of country church advance are clearly indicated. Through

surveys and experience we have both the diagnosis and the cure in our hands. By the application of sheer Christianity to the situation, and only so, will the way be cleared for those churches destined to survive to serve well.

Chairman Elliott: You will note that in the closing minutes of this afternoon's session, we are making a transition really to to-morrow, because there are coming to us constructive suggestions and proposals that we shall want to examine further in the discussion to-morrow. Three emphases have been made. First, really bringing into the coöperatives, and particularly into the Church, scientific method, which will mean that we shall have effective ways of influencing behavior and making the churches socially useful; second, a new or different attitude denominationally with reference to overhead and perhaps location of responsibility in local communities to work out combinations; and, third, a community outlook and a community approach so far as the Church is concerned, whether that means division of territory, community church, or what it may mean, as your discussions may reveal. These three suggestions are made in the way of proposals.

We are now to have the pleasure of listening to Father Edward V. O'Hara, Eugene, Oregon, Director of Rural Life Bureau, Social Action Department, National Catholic Welfare Conference, who will take up for us further phases of our program, and his will be the closing address of the afternoon.

A RURAL RELIGIOUS PROGRAM AS VIEWED BY A CATHOLIC

By Reverend Edwin V. O'Hara
Director of Rural Life Bureau, Social Action Dept.,
National Catholic Welfare Conference

Before entering upon the consideration of how a rural religious program is to be made effective, it will be important to ask what is the substantial content of the proposed program, by whom it is to be promoted, and what claim it may have to be accepted by the rural population.

A Rural Religious Program

Religion consists of all the bonds which unite man to his Creator or which bind men to their fellow-men as a result of their common relations to God. The substantial content of a religious program,

therefore, is the giving to men the knowledge of their relations to God and their fellow-men, as children of God; and the making effective of this knowledge in human conduct. It is the function of religion to teach men the ultimate purpose of living and to assist in directing their daily actions so as to attain the ultimate end. This definition of the place of religion in human affairs which places primary emphasis on the relation of the individual to God, by no means excludes a consideration of man's relation to his neighbor. On the contrary! Nothing human is foreign to the interests of religion because it is the whole man who is called to the knowledge and service of God.

While the Catholic Church then will warrant a wide and thoroughgoing social program in looking to the religious needs of the population, it will insist on due proper perspective and will call attention to the fact that the First Commandment is: "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy strength," and that the second, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," is a consequence of the first, due to the fact that we are all called to be children of God.

The Church as the Agency of Religion

The agency through which a rural religious program is to be made effective is in the first place—the Church. The spreading of religion is the proper and the whole business of the Church. It exists for no other purpose and will be effective only when it keeps its own purpose in mind. By necessity religion in giving a purpose to life, will polarize all human conduct and it will be the duty of the Church to try to effect this polarization. The Church must be careful not to lose perspective in its work, not to elevate trivial matters into the foreground of its endeavors, not to become so involved in promoting the temporal welfare of mankind as to forget its own chief function. Should it do so, it will not only fail to accomplish the purpose for which alone it exists, but it will probably block the way of other agencies which could perform more effectively the tasks which it is gratuitously assuming. On the Church and its ministry then, will devolve in the first place, the execution of the rural religious program. Other agencies may assist insofar as the immediate purpose of such agencies may lie in the same direction as the purposes of the Church. But it is the Church which will have to define its own religious program and to assume full responsibility for its execution.

Social Activities of the Church

It may be asked why the rural population should welcome the social activities of the Church. All wholesome, social life depends upon the moral character of those who share it. Religion is the primary character building agency and by its insistence on charity and justice establishes the foundations for social life. Religion,

moreover, has at its command, in its appeal to conscience, the most powerful social leaven. In a democracy, an educated conscience among the masses of people is the ultimate source of strength. Historically, religion has proven the most cohesive of social bonds and nowhere are social agencies of cohesive strength more needed than where the population is sparse and individualism highly developed.

The emphasis of religion on the observance of law, and the sacredness of the family tie establishes the Church in the first rank of the guardians of civil and social progress. From these considerations, it is obvious that the Church with a well conceived and effectively executed social program can render the greatest assistance to the rural community.

Religious Education

Religious education is primarily a character-forming agency, and since childhood is the period in which character is formed, the first duty of the rural pastor will be the religious education of the children of his parish. The distinction between mere religious instruction and religious education comes to mind at once. Formal religious instruction may be given adequately in a few hours a week. Not so with religious education which involves the discipline of conscience and requires that the child's responsibility to Almighty God shall be appealed to as a motive of conduct in the whole school program. At the present time, religious education is considered incompatible with public school administration though nothing certainly could be further from the traditional American practice. Until a modification of this view is obtained, it will be the duty of the pastor to maintain a religious school wherever it is practicable to do so. Where, by reason of sparsity of numbers, or because of distance, or bad roads, or other similar reasons, it is impossible to maintain a religious school of standard scholarship, it will be the pastor's duty to avail himself of every facility at hand for religious education. Chief among these will be a vacation school where he can gather his children during the Summer time for a month and, with the aid of experienced religious teachers, give religious training to the children under his care. He will find in the religious correspondence courses a means of reaching his scattered flock during the Winter and enabling the father and mother to direct the religious training of their children. He will not neglect Sunday School, nor the opportunity of an occasional hour of instruction when children are free from public school attendance, though he will realize that both are sadly inadequate to the task of religious education.

I am convinced that an important reason for the low state of rural parishes in the United States is to be found in the fact that the rural minister has been effectively prevented from reaching the children of his flock except on Sunday and thus, for the greater

part of the week, as far as the most important duty committed to his care is concerned, has been only able to twiddle his thumbs. That men of intelligence and capacity should weary of such a program is not to be wondered at.

Worship

Worship: Another fundamental feature of the Church's social program is public worship. The minister of religion will conduct public worship as a social act whereby the community recognizes its dependence on God, its Creator, Redeemer and Father. Just as the individual in the privacy of his chamber must raise his heart in prayer to God, so also man as a social being must join with his fellow-men in social worship. Worship is a debt owed to God in strict justice and the neglect of it is a sin against the Great Commandment as dishonesty to our neighbor is a sin against the second. I shall not pause to stress the advantages to a rural community of social worship,—the spiritual stimulus from its central act or the wholesome social emotions released by the accessories of worship, its ritual, music and sermon. In promoting public worship, the Church will be interested in the means which render access to worship easy, namely—good roads and every means of communication.

Cultural Social and Health Responsibilities

Culture: Since religion involves the homage of the intelligent, it is obvious that the Church cannot be satisfied to minister in intellectual back-waters without attempting to stir them. It may be true that the religious devotion of an illiterate person may be subjectively as meritorious as that of the most learned, but it will not be doubted that the religious homage of a cultivated mind has excellencies not to be found in the ignorant. The Church will realize that music and art are handmaidens to religion and are capable of carrying the religious message.

Social: For the effective promotion of religion, the Church will develop social and recreational activities. Not in any narrow sense. The very social strength of the religious bond makes the Church a rallying center for the social activities of its members. These social activities should include every innocent form of amusement.

Health: Religion is to subserve the needs of the whole man—man composed of body as well as soul. Saintliness and sanitation; health and holiness are etymologically related and not without reason. Hardly will the Church commend its religious administration more effectively than by its concern for the health of its people. Religious hospitals and trained nurses who are consecrated to a religious service should be found ministering to the rural population.

The Church and the Coöperative Movement

Coöperative Movement: The Church cannot be indifferent to the material welfare of the community in which it ministers. Nevertheless, there are many other agencies which are organized especially for the promotion and material well-being which will be more effective in this field than the Church can hope to be. But the least that can be asked of the rural pastor in this connection will be that he should be informed of the material needs of his people; that he should coöperate whole-heartedly with the agencies that are undertaking their material betterment and that he should place the resources of the parish at their disposal as far as is compatible with the performance of his more fundamental duties.

There is one feature of the economic problem, however, which demands especial attention from the religious leader. Namely, the Coöperative Movement. It will undoubtedly be through the co-operative movement that the farmer will secure justice in his contractual relations in the marketing of his produce, and for this reason the rural pastor will promote the movement. But he will also find that the coöperative movement should be promoted as a Christian organization of industry. "Bear ye one another's burdens and so ye shall fulfil the law of Christ."

Moreover, it will teach his flock to work together and thus knit together the threads of rural life into true community association. And finally, by restoring to the farmer the responsibility of his own financing and marketing and transportation, it will restore intellectual interest to the farmer and will serve as the most effective means to accomplish a supreme task which the Church should undertake to promote for its own well-being and that of the nation; namely, the anchoring to the land, of a larger proportion of the strong, intelligent and imaginative young men and young women who are reared on the land, and whose continued residence there is essential for the up-building of a rural civilization and the safeguarding of the well-springs of population.

MONDAY MORNING

PROPOSALS FOR MEETING THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

General Session

Chairman Elliott: We are working, as has been suggested, upon a particular plan at the request of those in charge of the program, because it is assumed—and perhaps you will agree or not agree with this—that this conference will make a difference in action in country communities and in relation to rural life in proportion as the results of this conference are emotionally and intellectually built into the action of the delegates who are here at the Convention. If these results simply go into the proceedings and these are printed and then put into a library, they will have some effect. But if the results can be a part of our own changed conviction, and we can understand one the other, then we are much more likely to have something happen as a result.

We are coming together again this morning in the spirit of real interest in country life, so that we can speak with entire frankness and at the same time be quite as eager to hear the viewpoint and the attitude of other persons.

REVIEW OF SITUATIONS CAUSING CONCERN

May we read together for just a moment this material * which has just been put into our hands so that we may see where we want to take hold of this problem this morning. "A," "B" and "C" represent three types of situations in which the focus of the problem is around the community approach, the community organization, the Farm Bureau, the Grange, the women's clubs, the schools, etc. You have in "D" and "E" situations in which the denominational divisions represent the problem. The next situation, "F," has to do with the

* Mimeographed copies of the Summary of Situations were distributed at this time. See pages 20-22 for this summary.

question as to whether the church shall confine itself to so-called devotional or exclusively religious exercises and approaches, or whether it shall have a message and a relationship to the community problems. In "G" we find a community in which the agencies are on the job and things are going well but where there are too many of them. In "J" we have a church "ready to go," but does not know what to do.

Now, where is the place we need to begin in meeting these situations? Has anybody a proposal?

PROPOSALS FOR MEETING SITUATIONS WITH COMPETING AGENCIES AND LOYALTIES

MR. MACLAREN: I believe that underlying the whole thing is the appreciation and understanding and conception of what the church is really there for.

MR. FELTON: It seems to me we should begin with what makes a community this way rather than what makes the church this way. Something has been said about going into a community with a new church. These overhead sinners we talk so much about, suppose they should import a real model church and then go back to New York or Philadelphia? I think in six months there might be the old conditions again. In other words, the question to ask is, what makes the community what it is? Not what makes the church what it is.

The Community Analyzing Its Own Needs

MR. VAUGHN: If I were to go into this work, which I have done for ten years, I should analyze the needs of the community. My highest ambition is that the community should be developed rather than any denominational program. I should attack the community in its present state. Then I should see what my approach should be to bring about the desired results. Then I should work towards these other ends. Technique comes in, of course. They are all coupled together in one great program of action. But the viewpoint that I must get must be the community, and that is the viewpoint I have always had, and so far unless I get some more information out of this Conference I have got to stick to that as my main goal.

MR. CAMPBELL: It seems to me that the problem is to get more folks with that idea into the community. Are we going to do it—that conception of religion?

MR. RAMSDELL: I would suggest a slight amendment to that, that it is not so much myself going in and analyzing the needs of the community as it is myself going in and helping the community to analyze its own needs.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Would you put down as a proposal for one way of getting out of the confusion represented in situations A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H and I, *would be for the community to analyze its needs,* and would you say or did you mean, Mr. Ramsdell, *plan its own program?*

MR. RAMSDELL: Yes.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Are there other proposals?

MR. DARROW: I do not think anyone can say in a sentence what would be required, but I think it can be stated in general terms, thus: Any means that will get the leaders to thinking on a given objective. I know communities in which they have done it by getting the leaders together in discussion groups, eating together, and perpetually centering their thought on what is best for the community. If they do that they will eventually get together, particularly if they will persist in the search for the answer to the question of what is best for the community.

Arousing Community Consciousness

MISS GOLDEN: It seems to me one of the first things to do in a community is to arouse community consciousness and loyalty particularly if denominational consciousness is too prevalent.

MR. MANN: There seem to be five possible approaches: the church school type, the school center type, the club and council center, which is practically two approaches to the same problem or the same situation, and then the overhead county type or organized type. If the community could decide which of these would fit that particular community to the best advantage, thinking in terms of that which offers the people in the community the best advantage, some one of these would fit in almost every case. If the folks would come together and work through one or more of these direct approaches to the way out it would create a community consciousness. For example, if there are four churches and none has recreational facilities and the High School has a gymnasium, it would not be the thing to build a new gymnasium in each of those churches or in any one of them, but use the school center approach. If the church has a gymnasium and the school does not have those facilities, then ap-

proach it from that angle. Or if the agencies are hopelessly competitive, perhaps a Council could be the objective on which they would be brought together.

Community Score Card

MR. RAPKING: I have in my hand here what is known as a community score card, in which we have set up definite standards. We go into a community and get them together and use this score card. They help us. We do it together. They put down the figures. It is done in a community meeting. The folks are all there. We started this method in 1917 and it is growing all the while. We have been in about 175 communities. We have been back for the eighth time to a community, scoring it eight times; six times for some and five for others. The program is growing all the while. So the thing which you people are thinking of here is actually in action over in West Virginia, and has been for years. We then diagnose the case, find out what the community needs, take into consideration all of the factors there, the churches and the schools and any other organizations, and then measure the community in terms of these standards. Mr. Frame is responsible for this idea. Commencing with 1920, we included religion in our scoring. I have a chart here which gives the idea we have. Let us take this illustration. I do not think a doctor could help a patient very much without knowing what a well patient should be like. So we not only think of the sick fellow, but we think of the well fellow. We must have an ideal, we must have a standard, we must have a goal. You must know where you want to lead your people before you can lead them. We have set up these standards. It is just like a doctor trying to doctor a person without knowing what a well person is like. He must know what his health is supposed to be, what his temperature is supposed to be. In a brief way that is our reason for the score card, so that we could really diagnose the case in order to suggest remedies, in relation to what a well community might be.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: I understand that the group feels that this duplication of agencies and competition through each group looking at the community from its own approach, whether school or church or other agency, would be obviated if we got a community studying all of those needs together, if we had some sort of machinery by which folks with different responsibilities in the community could get together, if there were any methods by which we were arousing

a community rather than a sectional consciousness, and if we could pool the distinctive contributions and equipment of these varying agencies in the community.

The following summary of proposals in regard to competing agencies and loyalties was then made on the blackboard:

1. Community must analyze its own needs.
2. Get some means for bringing leaders together.
3. Arouse community consciousness in agencies and individuals.
4. Recognize distinctive organizations; pool their equipment; use council to integrate activities.
5. Use community score card.

MR. BURR: There is another problem involved in your first statement in regard to the community analyzing its own needs. You could send that statement out broadcast and it would not get action. Who is going to lead the community in analyzing itself? Who is going to do for the community what you are doing here? You may find an intelligent group, but still there is the necessity of the leader to assist in analyzing the need. When we get into the Farm Bureau Projecting Program, we say we do the same thing. We have the community analyze its needs and choose its own project. But I am quite sure that if somebody should suggest that one project would be to get rid of the Farm Bureau Department, the leader who was projecting the program would lead them away from that analysis. I speak of the Farm Bureau because I am interested in that organization. The same thing would be true if the Red Cross should lead in analyzing the needs. It would be all right until somebody states that one need in the community is to get rid of the Red Cross. Now, who is to lead the community in analyzing its needs?

Coördinating Community Agencies

MISS HERRING: I rather think this idea of coördinating of community activities may not be always just what we mean. The only analysis of the community's needs which has value comes as a by-product of doing things together. I believe that our coördination is not going to come from getting representatives of organizations together to say, "Now, we will coördinate ourselves," but from groups of people associating themselves around an idea and working out that idea. This means evolving a common purpose which will affect a

community, and ultimately working out an analysis of the need of that community and a coördination of that community. In a little town in Iowa they decided that there was something needed to be done about pictures, and a group of women representing every organization in that community came together. They met once a week from nine o'clock in the morning until eleven o'clock and discussed problems of their community, but their immediate objective was cleaning up the moving pictures. Out of that one simple activity the ideals of that community have grown better and are coming to be a force. There is more community consciousness than there ever has been in the past.

MISS GOLDEN: I am from the University of Iowa. I just wanted to comment on that statement, to arouse community consciousness. Let it be clearly understood that that consciousness is to be aroused in each one of the agencies as well as in the individual members or citizens of the community. The churches must have a community consciousness. There is your first step. I have worked in West Virginia. I have been in West Virginia Country Life Conferences and I have seen in the use of that score card and by means of the chart Mr. Rapking is ready to present, an opportunity to coördinate these communities and make the people conscious of themselves as a community. They are doing it.

MR. VERMILYA: I am from the Home Missions Council of New York. I think there is much to be considered in what Doctor Burr has said. These communities are not abstractions. They have these lines of division running through them. They are affected by movements that have been on for years. It seems to me if we are to get anywhere in the community, we must have that kind of coördination, both of the forces in the community and the forces that are being played upon the community, that will help solve the problem. I believe it is possible to bring these coördinating agencies together and into a coöperative effort if we will just set our heads towards it. I should like to say this, that we are succeeding in bringing the denominational leaders in our state together to consider the interests of these communities from the standpoint of the community and the Kingdom rather than from the standpoint of the denomination. I think it is an opportunity to bring together each of these interests and persuade them to consider these matters from a community standpoint. If I understand the sentiment that is developing in the hearts and minds of

our leaders to-day, both in the churches and in the communities, that sentiment is developing along the lines I have indicated.

MR. DEWEY: I am from Pennsylvania. Several times I have heard the Farm Bureau mentioned in this organization, but I would call your attention to the fact that there is another organization that is prevalent in about 35 of the 48 states, and it is the only organization, rural organization, that has lived for 58 years, not only in this country but in any other country. It is the only farm organization in existence that has survived for that length of time. And that organization is the Grange. In the Grange we have already established splendid halls in these rural communities. The Farm Bureau Organization is purely and simply, as far as I have been able to learn, an economic organization, while the Grange is a social organization as well as economic. The thought is this. In every word, in every precept, almost every line of our organization, we teach the practice of the very things in our Grange that you are trying to do here. We would welcome in our Grange Organizations the very activities you are seeking to promulgate in your respective communities. I believe there is no better place in which to do this, the very work that you have in hand, than in these Granges where they are already established.

Taking Responsibility for Coördinating Community Enterprises

MR. ANDERSON: I am from Illinois and the Rock River Conference of the Methodist Church. I think somebody in the community must have this coördinating idea on his heart, to go to the other organizations of the community, present his idea, and have them get together. I speak now specifically in regard to our own community. We have organized just along that line. I happen to be the Methodist Pastor, and I took the lead. I went to the different organizations of the town, the School Board, the Faculty, the Town Council and asked them to send representatives to a Council. We got together and formed a Community Council of Representatives elected from these various organizations, and talked over our community problems. That effort grew into a community spirit and a community conscience or consciousness. We are working at our problems together in all lines.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: What would you say to Miss Herring, that unless you work together on something this Community Council will do no good?

MR. ANDERSON: We do work together. We take as objectives things that are needed in the community. For instance, we have the Lyceum idea. We have turned out all of the Chautauquas and all of the mid-winter Lyceum Bureaus that come to us and try to put on a program. We don't want them any more, because they have lowered their ideals. They are no good to us, because they do not help us as a community. We are building our own community Lyceum program. We make our own selections of talent. So with our recreations. We have a Committee appointed to furnish leadership for community recreation. The business men of our town are playing volley ball and basketball in our community High School gymnasium. I do not want to build a community house in connection with my church. It wouldn't serve the Presbyterians at all. The Presbyterians would have to build one if I built one. We just cut that out. We have only one Community House, and that is in connection with our Community High School. We all go there and we all feel at home, every one of us. We are working out some of our programs on that line.

PRESIDENT BUTTERFIELD: What would happen to that Community Council and to the program of the community if on January 1st you moved permanently out of the community?

MR. ANDERSON: I hold no office. I have the biggest job in the community as the pastor of a church. I should not want any office, but I want the people to get together, as Methodists, Presbyterians, United Brethren and even some German Lutherans. That work will stand because it is built on the community and not on me.

Community Consciousness in the Small Community

MR. GWIN: I am from St. Louis, the American Red Cross. I should just like to ask how large a community the gentleman lives in. To my mind that brings up a community of not less than 10,000 and as high as 40,000. That is, not purely a rural community. I am thinking of rural communities or towns of 1,000 or 2,000. In these communities we do not have the question of churches, but perhaps of a church. We do not have agencies to coördinate, because in many of them there is no real agency that is active. So in those communities with one and two thousand people we have the problem of developing a community consciousness first, and

second, the recognition on the part of the leaders that they have a real problem.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: What do you suggest that you do with a community that doesn't have any competing groups but just doesn't want to do anything?

MR. GWIN: It is a matter of getting the meetings of the individuals rather than the meetings of groups, where they will consider their problems, where they will study the things they need to have done. I think it is not just developing a consciousness, but they want to know how they are going to meet their problems.

In response to questions from Chairman Elliott, Mr. Anderson said Waterman was a village of 400, but that the community included the entire High School area of six country school districts.

Coördinated Activities in a "Trade Zone" Community

MR. DANA: I am from New York City, the Rural Life Department of the Congregational Home Missions. I think the point you have brought out here depends on the meaning of the word "community." The community is the trade zone as far out as the business house goes for business, so that the church may go that far. Up in Maine they have a parish of 200 square miles. They have this Council idea. They have each one of eleven neighborhoods with one member on the Council and two from the main ones. They get together and formulate a program, and a community consciousness, which is not one of those little groups but of the whole vast area of 200 miles, is developed. It solves those little jealousies on the part of the small community. It creates a consciousness of the larger community. I hope we shall stick to that word "community" in its large sense. The most neglected thing in this work to-day is visitation and the taking notice of these farm homes who have no voice in these matters at all. They should be given a voice and be given this community consciousness and a part in these community agencies.

A Community Council

MR. CARGO: I am from Cass City, Michigan. We have in our community a village of 1,400, with the surrounding territory of farms. The village is in a district entirely rural. There are four or five churches, but we have arranged a Council or what we call a Community Club, and the Executive Committee of that Com-

munity Club directs the work. This committee is composed of the Pastors of the local churches, including the Catholic Priest and four Protestant Churches, the Superintendent of the High School, and then laymen representing the four churches in the village, and the three churches in the outlying district. The Club has a membership of 150 men, paying dues of $3.00 a year. So far their chief activity has been that of holding a community meeting once a month, with an outside speaker, who gives to the community the newer ideas of community progress. We are trying to build just now a sense of community oneness and community solidarity, hoping we shall be able to meet the community's problems.

MR. RAPKING: We are doing that in 175 communities in West Virginia. So far as the Community Council is concerned, don't get the foolish notion that when you have the Council, it is going to do the work. It is more a matter of spirit. Most of our Councils have no fixed organization or rules. It is a matter of spirit more than it is organization.

Community Educational Activities

MR. PENNOYER: I am from Boston, the Department of Social Welfare for the Universalist Churches of the United States and Canada. Something was asked about the community that hasn't any institutions in it already. That may be an advantage; it may be a disadvantage. An organization should have some departments. I think it is easy enough to convince the people of that community the same as any other that the thing is needed. I should say that the way to do that is to go ahead and hold a community educational night or a Lyceum or whatever it may be. Then again have a community recreational night. Then have a speaker on community welfare. Then the people are ready to get together when they recognize the need. That is true even in the smallest community, with no institutions. I do not see any way in which people can get light on all community problems so well as they can by this method of a community forum. The community itself needs the education. It needs its own expression to begin with. I think that comes first, and recreation second in the line of progression. I do not believe in a community forum as an independent thing. I do not believe in multiplying agencies, but this is a part of a community movement. It is desirable that the community have a chance to express itself and that individuals have a chance to go to school together

The smallest community may be the most easily approached of all communities.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Does anybody know about a community forum?

Raising Question Concerning the Issue Being Discussed

DOCTOR TAYLOR: I am not going to answer that question. I am going to throw a bucket of cold water. I don't know whether it will be accepted or not. I think in this Convention through these discussion groups and the situations which we have evolved, or brought from our communities yesterday, we developed considerable interest and emotional content in the Convention which we are not utilizing to-day, due to the fact that we are not coming quickly—whether we are coming at all or not I do not know—to proposals concerning the situations which we got "het-up" over yesterday. In other words, it seems to me we have started with the assumption here which we might have reached at the conclusion of this convention: *viz.* that the way to solve the situations which people were concerned about yesterday is by developing a community conscience or consciousness. At that point we have departed into such a discussion that I am sure anybody newly introduced would not recognize the theme of this Convention. It was called to consider religion in country life, and unless we are going more directly to the issues about which we are concerned than I see we are, we are not going to accomplish anything. I should like to see the thing take a turn in the direction of that idea. We are discussing community work. Everything that happens in rural life happens in a community, and there is no need to devote our attention to matters of this type. They take care of themselves. I should like to throw this bucketful of cold water or this sledge hammer into this thing. I should like to see the next woman or man that gets up, talk to the point of the Convention rather than something that he had on his chest when he came here.

MR. EARP (Drew Theological Seminary): I want to talk to A (see Summary of Situations, pages 20-22) concerning those people who say that their business activities, hauling milk, and so forth, interfere with the church schedule of meetings. I would suggest you change the church schedule if those activities have to do with the cows, because they have to be milked. That is all.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS TO MEET SITUATIONS WITH COMPETING AGENCIES AND LOYALTIES

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Will you permit the Chairman a moment's summary of where we are?

My understanding is that thus far we have dealt with one question, which I take it, if Professor Taylor's suggestion is correct, you have already settled or at least tried to settle. We found under situation D and G, denominations and other agencies (see Summary of Situations, pages 20-22), such as Red Cross, Y. M. C. A. and Farm Bureaus, looking at their own particular contributions to the community and not considering those from the viewpoint of the community as a whole. As a result we noted the development of denominational or group consciousness rather than a community consciousness, which was hindering rather than helping the community development. As I understand it the reason for these first suggestions, and the reason, Professor Taylor, I allowed them to continue was that we needed to consider for fifteen or twenty minutes these particular types of situation.

The suggestions have been rather specific and we may now summarize them and go on with the next point, unless you wish to press them further.

Chairman Elliott then referred to the notations on the blackboard which were now as follows:

1. The community must analyze its own needs.
2. Get some means for bringing leaders together.
3. Arouse a community consciousness in agencies and individuals.
4. Recognize distinctive organizations; pool their equipment; use a council to integrate activities.
5. Use community score card.
6. Get help from outside in analyzing needs. This cannot come from any special agency because each of those assumes that it is needed. Must have neutral help such as state extension course.
7. Get together better around some problem or situation than merely around getting together.
8. Coördinate agencies. Denominational leaders must put first the community and the Kingdom.
9. Somebody in the community must have the coördinating idea on his heart, and go to others.
10. Do not duplicate equipment.
11. Community is trade zone. Should have area consciousness.
12. Community enterprises. Community educational night with speakers. Community forum.

Chairman Elliott then made a summary of the discussion.

My understanding of what has been done thus far is this: There are summarized on the blackboard and there have come in the suggestions three or four matters which you say, unless in some way you meet them, there will be no possibility of a community approach to the religious situation.

First, the community must find its own needs. The problem here arises, because usually it finds its own needs through the transformer of somebody who has a special interest, and, therefore, who does not look at the community as a whole. Therefore, we must develop ways for the community to see its own needs from the community viewpoint.

Second, you say unless you can get varying groups of persons meeting together to talk about these matters, to work with regard to the community as a whole, you will not be able to develop the community spirit and prevent competitions. You have suggested forums and other methods of accomplishing this.

Third, you suggested that unless the people are working together on something that is of concern, it will be nothing but a paper organization. If there is a Lyceum, if there are movies, if there is recreation, something of community concern on which they can start to work, that will make a difference.

Fourth. It has been suggested that this will mean in every community somebody who cares enough about this to take the initiative and to be willing to make this a part of his business.

Fifth. This will mean that overhead agencies and denominations and all groups will need to be willing to consider the particular approach of their organization from the community viewpoint, and consider it a crime to the community to duplicate equipment, for instance.

Are there any other proposals that you wish to make? Three or four of these it seems are specific enough so that members of the Conference here could go back home and follow them; they could call the groups together; they could actually work on matters of common concern.

MR. RAMSDELL (New York): With regard to your first point, it seems to me that that summary does not quite do justice to our discussion unless it takes account of the fact that this whole discussion departed from the statement that there should be somebody to go in and analyze the field, which we revised to say that somebody

should go in and help the community to do it. It sort of leaves the thing unfinished to state it as you have. Nothing will happen unless the community gets to the point of getting excited by itself. All these national organizations—denominational, social work and others—exist. Nothing we are going to do is going to put them out of business. They are going to go right on functioning. We must get these people who are in the communities to do something.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Then may I make this modification in the summary, which it seems to me your point would suggest? If there are any other items in the summary on which we are not united please modify them, just as Mr. Ramsdell has done. It was suggested by Mr. Vermilya and others that this community approach would not necessarily come from the communities, but that overhead groups would be willing to work together and come to the communities with a coördinated approach. Traveling secretaries of various organizations must then be brought to a willingness to go into the community with a community emphasis to stir it up from the standpoint of the community.

MR. COEN (Colorado): We ought to bring into these meetings the people who are not interested, the people who are opposing, as well as those who are willing to help.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: May we now continue the discussion? Will you please indicate the next proposal from the viewpoint of religion in the country that seems to you important?

PROPOSALS TO MEET SITUATIONS WHERE RELIGION LACKS DYNAMIC AND EFFECTIVENESS IN COUNTRY LIFE

MR. TAYLOR: There is one question that is indicated at a number of points in these issues; and that is the content of the religious message and the technique of putting it into the conduct or the hearts of the people. That is shown in a number of places here. How are we going to get at this?

Churches have fallen behind in comparison with other agencies that are carrying the communities forward with enthusiasm. I am taking this out of a statement on this problem. Organized religion is conservative and unable to measure up. The church fails to evaluate spiritual realities.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Would you be willing in the next thirty minutes to take up this second item? We have dealt with one item. Is there any practicable way to take hold of divisions in a community that is church centered or school centered, in competition, rather than as church and school and club and home, contributing to one community good? This afternoon in the small groups some of you will want to go further on this point. Professor Taylor suggests the second problem we discuss should be this: In these varying situations religion seems not to make a difference in behavior and conduct, and at times religion has nothing to do with farm problems or economics. We do not seem to know how to make religion the dynamic it is supposed to be in relation to these problems in country life. Have you any definite proposals as to how religion might be made a more definite, effective, dynamic part of the life of the country?

Theological Students and the Rural Church

MR. WILKINS (Boston Seminary): It seems to me that the relation of any single church to the community life depends upon the leaders in that church. If that is so, where are your leaders coming from? I come from a group of about 400 theological students. This group of students is looking forward to their life work. What is this organization giving that group of students that will interest them in the rural church? I have been sitting here in session since Friday afternoon. A good many of the things that I have to take back with me are negative. A good deal of it has been denunciation of the rural church. What are the constructive things I can take back to the students that will give them the vision of the opportunity in the church in the country? Are you sending any special challenge to the youth now being trained? Unless you get to the youth who are being trained to-day, these problems will not be solved.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Give some positive suggestions. We should like to know what you would say.

MR. WILKINS: A group of students met just before I came here. This was their question: Why is it that students are not being interested in the rural church? I have come here to take the answer back with me. I have not come here to give any answer.

MRS. STOCKMAN (State Board of Agriculture and State Grange

of Michigan): I have been thinking of my own state of Michigan where last year our Department of Agriculture said 41,000 farms were abandoned, and that did not include the young men who leave their homes and go to the great cities. I am thinking of the great city near which I live that has doubled in the last ten years. I am thinking of the counties where there are empty houses on almost every by-road. And I have been thinking about the methods of which we have been talking. But I could not help but respond to this appeal made by this young man over here. Just a few weeks ago his dad said to the boy in my own home who is thinking of some day being a rural pastor: "Son, you will not be able to compete financially with the other two boys, one of whom is an engineer and the other an architect." And the young man said, "No, Dad, I know I sha'n't out in the country, but," he said, "after all what does money buy? There is a challenge for a great service." Now, folks, there are a number of towns or communities where the big problem is not what to do with the folks who are there. The folks are not there in many instances. I am not disturbed about too many churches. I am disturbed about the places where there are no people. I am very emphatic in my own opinion that the thing to do is to ask them to take their automobiles and come into town. They only come as guests. I think we need to build a church out in the country, and I believe thoroughly, too, that if we could send out a challenge to the young men of this Nation that they come out with their overalls on to live with us, it would help. There are wonderful opportunities in the country, real country living, real country life. You remember what our brother, the Catholic Priest from Oregon, said, how the detectives went after that man. You can't send them back that way very often with a Ford. They are loading up their household goods and going to the city, and there is a crisis on in agriculture. We have a new type of man who is going to help us solve some problems. He is going to teach our young men better methods of farming. But the great hope and trust we have is that he is going to inspire the young men and the young women of our State to go out into the country and there build a rural America. And I believe that the church people can send out a real challenge to these young men and these young women, to which they will respond as they have in many other things, just as they would go to the mission fields of China or Africa.

Relating Religion to Social and Economic Needs

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Will you permit the suggestion that we have a very specific immediate situation to consider? You have described a type of situation (see Summary of Situations, pages 20-22), in which the church in the country is making an exclusively devotional emphasis and what they promote is unrelated to social and economic needs. You have described another type of situation where the church is trying to deal with social and economic needs and behavior, but it seems to make no difference on what is going on in the community. You described a third type of situation where you say your community organizations have a lack of spiritual values. You would like religion increasingly to be a factor in the life of the country. Now, specifically what is the matter, and what do you propose? Are we on the right trail in the kind of church we emphasize? Where do you want it changed? Should the church be given up altogether? What is it you propose definitely?

MR. HIERONYMUS: (University of Illinois) It would be luminous, I am sure, if Mr. Anderson had told us the steps that led up to the forming of that community High School which they accept as the center of that community. I happened to be there ten years ago and know something of it. I should like to relate as briefly as I can the experience we are just having in Illinois which bears directly on this problem. The College of Agriculture of the University of Illinois has, within the last six months, conducted in three sections of the state conferences for pastors mainly in the open country and for interested active laymen. There were in attendance at the one day conference at each of these places in round numbers a hundred people, including four home officers, three country superintendents of schools, the heads of various rural organizations, 30 to 40 rural ministers. In those meetings, as far as was possible in four hours, there were set before those men who had come that morning from their fields of work and went back that night to them again, the specific one, two, three things suggested by the farm advisers and the home officers, and the Smith-Hughes teachers of agriculture and of domestic science and others that were called—the specific thing which they were ready and willing to do in connection with these churches. The next step after these three regional conferences were county conferences, called primarily by the farm adviser in

coöperation with the home officer, if there is one, the Country Superintendent of Schools, the health nurse, or whatever other county-wide machinery there may be. To these county conferences were invited every pastor that has a rural problem in the town or out in the country, his wife, and interested lay workers. In these county conferences essentially the same thing was brought out. In one such county conference, the farm adviser was asked, "Will you be willing to come to all of our community meetings within the month?" There were 26 centers in the county. He said, "No, but we will see that the various workers who have any contribution to make to the life of the community through the church, shall divide up their time so that some of them can come usually to these meetings. We will bear part of the burden." Just as definitely as we can, without any fuss or feathers, we are reaching a majority of the counties in the state. And the next step beyond that is the church itself in actual operation in conjunction with these various agencies.

MR. WATSON: As one who has lived most of his life in the country and been in school work in the country and has preached in country communities, I want to make this specific proposal. In communities A, B, and C or at least in a number of them—I would not say this with regard to Waterman, Illinois, and some others—but in a number of communities, I wish to propose that the people who are interested in the spiritual life of the community, forget their attention to the church, and center their attention on the school or that other organization of the community in which the people are whole-heartedly giving themselves to the service of one another, without the partisan jealousies which the church has come to represent. The church stands for the young people in some communities —those of which I am speaking now—as a symbol of inefficiency educationally and as a symbol of division socially and not at all as a symbol of life. And I think those people who are interested in the religion of Jesus might very well give their attention to that other organization and have a real spiritual life in the country.

Worship as Center for Religion

MR. PAINTER: I am from Vermont. There are two things I want to say in regard to religion in country life. First, I want to say this as a preacher, that most of the preaching is bunk. I want to remind you of the thing that Father O'Hara said yesterday, that

religion must be centered not around preaching but around worship. I say that from a very different angle from what Father O'Hara said it. He said it as a Catholic. I say it as a Quaker. But the same thing is true, I am sure. You have said a number of times this morning that the only thing which will bring a group of people together in a community, is a single idea. Now, the greatest idea that will ever get men and women together and hold them together, the greatest ideal, is the ideal of religion, and that must center in worship. However inefficient the church is—and granting all of that, and it is true, as those of us who are working in it know—nevertheless we are not going to build a constructive and stable society rurally unless the cohesive idea which holds that people together and works out that problem is the cohesive idea of worship. Maybe we shall junk our church organizations. I am sure we shall junk most of our church programs as we have them at the present time.

Doctor Athearn's survey of Indiana is very enlightening. I wish someone had had the time to take the questionnaire that Doctor Athearn has put into the hands of the children, and the reactions he got from those mental tests and those moral tests. I should like to see those put into the hands of boys and girls in the country, and then on the basis of what he finds, give to them a constructive religious education that will begin to try to stress the thing that was suggested over here, that religion is life, and show how we can make the vital contacts in the individual, of the religion of Jesus? We adults are for the most part hopeless except as a few adjustments are concerned. We are dependent upon a generation which is yet to come to leadership. It is only through the careful and constructive and continued program of religious education, with all that it implies in leadership and guidance, that we can accomplish anything, that we are going to be able to rear up a spiritually-minded type of young people that will at once make improvements in response to a great many of the criticisms that have been suggested in our conference so far?

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Might I suggest we want to know from each person who speaks *why* he feels the proposal he makes, would help solve this problem of religion in country life. Why do some feel that to promote this spirit of worship and develop religious education, will help? Why do others feel that it might be advisable to center on the school?

MR. ROADMAN (Department of Rural Leadership, Upper Iowa University): Among the many very fine contributions which have been made, two seem to be most dynamic. One was the address by Father O'Hara yesterday and the other was the brief statement by Carl Anderson this morning. Wouldn't it be fair right here to ask where they got their inspiration? So that we can go to something of the same source if they can locate it for us. Have they forgotten the church and centered on the school? Or what have they done? Wouldn't it be fair to ask them to give us a moment relative to their inspiration and how they have maintained it.

MR. MAY: I am from Michigan, the County Y. M. C. A. I have been interested in the young fellow who brought up his thought from the Theological Seminary, and in what Mrs. Stockman had to say. I don't believe in scrapping the church.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Why don't you?

MR. MAY: I am working with forty groups of boys and girls that are normal school groups. Some of them are Catholics, some of them are German Lutherans, and some of them are the rank and file of our church folk, and some are not related to church at all. I have been interested in finding out what they think of the church. These are groups, particularly of boys, that come together for football and for physical and social expression. I want to get them into the church, and so we have been asking them why they don't belong to the church, and if they do belong, why they joined and what their church requires of them to join, and what makes a church fellow active. It seems to me we have got to get back even further than we have gotten here. We are trying to shove our own thinking down upon these communities. If we have a normal group of boys and spend one session after another on what they think of the church we may learn something.

Confusion as to Meaning of Religion

PROF. ARTMAN: I am interested in this question from a number of points of view. In the first place, from the interest in the immediate community, and in the second place, from the type of leadership that we want to send into these communities. I think that considerable of the talk up to date has been very, very wide of the mark. And I will tell you why. I just came from eight months of traveling among 27 universities of this country, and the experience

that we have in going into these universities is this, that neither students nor professors in our universities have made up their minds yet as to the meaning of religion. I want to leave it to this group if my experience is worth anything. If we are going to be of any value to this question as we go back into our businesses and back into our communities and our organizations, my judgment is we had better make up our minds a little as to the position and task of religion in human life. I feel that the religion of the rural church is going to fall down in these communities to-day, not because the ministers are wild, but because you and I are, because you and I and every last one of us have not yet solved fundamentally this thing so that we know what religion is. I can go into a college and question a hundred students. I shall find a hundred students who will say that science is critical and religion is blind faith. When you and I have worked in these communities and have allowed these boys and girls to go to these colleges believing that religion is a mere sort of blind faith, then we have missed the mark. On the other hand we are in the same situation when we allow teachers to be in these colleges who themselves do not know. I think I should like for this group here to make a pronouncement on religion.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Would you let me interrupt you to ask for our illumination what kind of conception of religion people have who believe honestly that we should focus on the school and what kind of conception of religion people have who believe honestly that we should emphasize the church worship, religious education, etc.?

Primacy of the Church

PROF. ARTMAN: I should like to say that the person who talks about the first has not studied the rural community. There isn't any question about it that the school and these other agencies do not represent the total life of the community. Up to date, bad as the church is, it is the only organization that represents the whole element of the family and the community group. (Applause.)

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Do I understand from your applause that the first does not represent a real point of view of this Convention? It is a point of view, I am told, held by many persons in the country, but evidently they are not represented here.

PROF. ARTMAN: It is a proposal when the church is misguided and does not understand what religion is. I am not saying I would

put the church at the center. I am not saying where I would put it. I would put the working church in the community. Don't put anything at the center. Put life at the center. And then when your church is functioning, it is the one organization that is going to produce a focal point in your community life. I think we will come to a new denominational understanding, but you are not going to do that until you come to an understanding of religion.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: We have a problem at which each of us is looking from a particular point of view. And it is never going to be solved, if you allow your Chairman to insist, until you understand the viewpoint of the person who is looking at it differently. I think we had better try for the moment to see why it is that some people really believe you will get your solution of the country problem by centering on worship and the church. Seemingly, Professor Artman gives us another emphasis that you will get your solution through the church as an all-inclusive social-religious-family organization, which does not center on the exclusively religious aspects of it.

Religion and Life

PROF. ARTMAN: Whenever you do that you are religious. I dislike all of these statements in the Convention that say, "Religion or." It never works. Wherever you have a life functioning and rising up at its best you have religion. Please do not say "Religion or." Please do not use the word "Religions" as over against something else. Whenever these other things are functioning and rising to their best, they become religion.

MISS HERRING: I believe that we have this separation between religion and life frequently because of the conception of worship as propitiation of wrong. I think one of the groups referred to the traditional rôle of the minister as the interpreter of religion. The ministers and people are alike. I do not believe you will solve this question of relating religion and life until we evolve a new technique by which the religious experience in every person is made to register in the life of the community. If we develop such a technique in our churches, it will be expected that people will bring the problems of their every day lives into the church and their fellowship. I know of no better way to connect religion and life than to change the rôle of minister and parishioner to a situation where they will

seek together to bring about the ministry of every day life in the church.

PROF. ANDERSON: I am not ready to admit that there is an antagonism between religion and life. That is one reason why I am not ready to say that the country preacher ought to be simply rural-minded. He ought to be universally-minded. He has other people besides farmers. He has other messages than simply the message of the soil, and he has other groups that are trying to express themselves. I am not ready to throw aside preaching, because it has a big place in the religious education of the people. Here is a farmer. What should he do? He should try as a human being to give his total contribution to life. That is what he ought to do. He should not simply be a man who expresses himself in the Farm Bureau. If a man simply expresses himself in the Farm Bureau and does not express himself in those other things in the community that are vital to that community, he is not giving his total contribution to life. If a man expresses himself in a devotional way and does not express himself in any other form, then he is not making his total contribution to life. The great burden of the message of the preacher is that you want to give your total contribution to life. And if you do that, we shall have coördinating activities, we shall have people who are expressing themselves and we shall have them here in the church. You won't scrap your church. You will bring your church into the very life of the activities, into the Grange and the Farm Bureaus and the Commercial Clubs. I think there is a big place for the total expression of our lives in the Kingdom of God.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION ON MAKING RELIGION DYNAMIC AND EFFECTIVE

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Will you permit a brief summary? There are two points of view represented with reference to the contribution of religion to life. One point of view emphasizes the place of worship and of religious education as stated by Mr. Painter. The other point of view was stated by Professor Artman in his insistence that you have to consider religion from the point of view of life and life functioning at its highest. The church is one factor, but it is life in the community after all. Mr. Anderson said the same thing. There seem to be two conceptions here as to how religion functions in life. Am I right or wrong? I think I am right. One

conception is that if you have devotional exercises of a fine and effective sort they will make a difference in the everyday affairs of life. The other says that unless you look at the affairs of everyday life and bring them into the church and bring them into your devotion and really look at life as a whole, religion will not function in every day life.

FURTHER DISCUSSION ON MAKING RELIGION DYNAMIC AND EFFECTIVE

PROF. ARTMAN: Why not both?

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: I don't know. That is what I am asking.

PROF. ARTMAN: I cannot understand why you should get that division. Certainly worship is one of the greatest of functions in religious education. If we want an adequate religious education, you cannot develop it without. On the other hand worship produces something in life. Certainly it does. Life produces something back in worship.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: It has been indicated in the discussion that it does not always.

PROF. ARTMAN: Let me illustrate just for a moment. There is a notion widely held that we work by ideas, that we have ideas and then we go out and we do the work. Any of you who have studied psychology know that ideas grow out of action in their genesis. After you have once gotten an idea it can turn around and help you in further action. It is exactly the same way in worship. Worship grows up out of the maelstrom of life in its efforts toward discovery. Then it assists you in going back into life. They are not separate. They are part and parcel of the same thing in its different phases. Worship is rounding out, bringing life up to its highest and best idealistic functions.

Now, I mentioned awhile ago that scientists will say, "Religion is the antithesis of science; science is one thing; religion is another thing." I consider that just pure ignorance and nothing else. We have so much of this view among us, that these various aspects of life are one thing and religion is another thing. They are not at all. There is no quarrel between life and religion. But when life uses every last one of its processes, science, discovery of any kind whatsoever, and then brings it up into its highest idealistic function, then you have religion.

What I should like to see is a pronouncement from this group

to the seminaries of this country, where so much of the training never will produce ministers that are adequate or ever can be adequate for the work in the rural or any other community. We need to show these seminaries the type of life we need in these communities. You are going to have the problem of the country church and other churches on you just so long as the ministers of to-day are trained as they are now.

A Definition of Religion

MR. JORDAN: It may seem absurd to try to define religion, realizing, of course, that there are a hundred definitions, and there are a hundred possibilities of difference. I think we shall not get very far unless we know what we mean by religion. I think we must think of religion as everything that belongs to the ideal life of man, that life of man that lies above the physical, that lies in the range of the spiritual. When a church is more interested in raising money and expending budgets, more interested in a system of ecclesiastical economies, than it is in the making of the souls of its people, we have missed the conception of true religion, because in those cases the churches have departed from their fundamental conception. We must have our spiritual program first and our economic program in the churches second. That is one thing that is wrong with the church life of America to-day. We have been killing the goose that lays the golden egg. We are looking upon these churches, if I may change the figure rapidly, as cows to be milked. We have been looking upon these churches as fields from which to get in money for outside agencies, and not as a place to cultivate the ideal life of man. We must look upon these churches as places to train children in the fundamental conceptions of life. The morality of the community depends upon the church. Whenever a community gives up the church, they want it back again for the sake of the training of the children. Yet Professor Athearn has shown that they are not doing this. They are failing in religious education. Look at the curriculum put into the ordinary country Sunday School. It is all miracle stories but very little emphasis on the Ten Commandments. It lays its stress on the old things and does not get to the heart of religion.

When somebody made the challenge yesterday that our religious education people in this country should produce a system of education for the rural church and not give all their attention to the city

church, he issued a challenge it seems to me that is perhaps the most important one before this Conference.

I believe that the church in the community should do for the community in this country what it has done in other countries and in all ages and in all religions. It should bind the community into social unity. Your unhappiness about the rural church is very often because it divides the community and breaks down brotherhood instead of uniting it. That is the reason Professor Burr gave the reaction he did yesterday. We are seeking for brotherhood. If the church destroys it, we say, scrap the church. But we do not believe a church needs to destroy brotherhood. The church ought to be the builder of brotherhood. So the church must be reformed in the light of at least these three great fundamental interests. It must be the builder of the ideal life of man. It must be the builder of morality. It must be the builder of social effort. There are a lot of other things belonging to religion but we must have these things and we must judge our own churches in the light of them or we are going to miss the point of the Conference.

Religion as Dynamic in All Life

MR. VERMILYA. I want to say amen to what Professor Artman said. I think here is the crux of our trouble, and in discussing it, we fail to realize we are in a process of development. You could not stop at any particular minute and find everybody at the same point and then be prepared to start out anew. We are further on our way than many of us realize. I want to tell you why I think we cannot make the school the center, and it is due to the fact of our conceptions of religion and also to the forces that are operating in the community as regards their thought of religion. There are some of us here who are thinking of religion in terms of codes and programs. There are some of us who are thinking in terms of a form of worship that is not connected up very closely with action in life. There are others of us who are thinking of religion as involving that kind of fellowship with the Infinite that puts our souls in tune with a higher type of action, and sets us to the task of finding codes and finding programs. And right at the root of this whole matter is the question of whether we shall center on religion as a dynamic with which we shall stimulate people in the community as a basis for their finding what they ought to do. If we are going to think of the activities of life, the economic activities, the schools,

as the sum total of the expression of human life, we are going to so limit our outlook as to defeat our purpose. The school is just one expression of human activity. It is a direction in which we move to secure certain particular things that are of value to life. It is utterly impossible to take the school or any other particular organization that has been created for one specific type of work and make that the center around which we shall build. We must build around some kind of conception and ultimately possibly around some kind of organization—I do not know what it will be—that will bring us into an attitude toward life where the Divine resources reinforce the responsibilities of life. This will give us the dynamic, the set of soul that will bring us to the things we should do. I do not think the church can champion the programs of the school, I do not think the church can champion the program of the Grange, I do not think the church can champion the moral reformers in the community, so far as the type of men they set up and their methods of procedure are concerned. I think religion should say to men: "You have upon you the responsibility and the privilege of finding a way or procedure that will bring back the best returns to your life, and God and his relation to you needs to be that dynamic which suggests to you these basic elements. You may make a thousand mistakes. We shall not champion your mistakes. We shall not be discredited by the mistakes you make. But we shall be credited with stirring you to the point where you will set your souls to the task of finding the right solution of your problem." We get into difficulty when we champion men and programs and then the people come back and say, "There is your church; they stood by that kind of men; there is your church; they stood by that kind of political program; there is your church; they stood by that kind of economic program." Every program of society to-day, friends, is a program before which or after which you can write a question mark. We are in the process of finding, and religion is the thing that ought to stimulate us to find, and the religious forces organized in the community ought to be the thing that would link a man up to his God in such a way as to feel that God was on his side when he set his soul toward these motives.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION OF MEANING OF RELIGION

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Is there a consensus at one point in this last part of the discussion? During the last few minutes there has

been a discussion as to what religion really is, and in what ways the church or organized religion has seemingly failed to make religion dynamic. Several have suggested that religion represents the spirit, the attitude, the relationship, in which all aspects of life are lived when they are lived at the highest a person can live them. It means School and Grange and Farm and all; life lived at its best, on the highest plane possible, not something separated from living. Therefore, worship will not be effective if it is isolated from the concerns of every day life, but worship represents the attempt to bring those concerns into a spiritual atmosphere, to see whether they can be solved on the highest levels, and then taken back into every day life. Religious education therefore has failed, when it has failed, because it has been dealing with questions apart from life and has not dealt with honesty and integrity and behavior in all the affairs of life. Are you together on these? They would mean definite shifts in the emphasis in religion.

Then is not our problem to determine here what you are going to say to these theological students and to Professor Artman's challenge that there won't be any ministers able to do this if we go on the way we are? Aren't we then challenged specifically to say, *"What would this mean in the religious life of the community, in the way religion is handled in the community?"*

FURTHER DISCUSSION ON RELIGION FUNCTIONING IN LIFE

MR. AIRHEART: Going on from that statement which you have made concerning what religion is, then the question would be, "What about the country church?" The church then is an agency to stimulate the very best that is in religion, the best that is in life. Now, if the church in a given community must serve through certain organizations, if they are there, and this work can be done better through those organizations than through the church, then it is the business of the church to give that inspiration and moral support to see that it is done. If there is no organization to do the work, then it is the business of the church to help provide an organization. I have gone on that basis in stimulating the work in country churches for a number of years, and I believe that that will help to solve the problem.

Out in the State of Washington on Whitney Island, the center of seven communities, we went into those communities. We did not

organize new organizations, but simply attempted to stimulate the leadership, to help them to get ideals, so that it was not the church that was doing it, but back of all these was the church inspiring these men to do their very best. And I think out of that they came to feel that this was for them religion.

MR. RAMSDELL: A few simple suggestions on what Mr. Artman has said. The social workers yesterday seemed to be of the opinion that whatever else they wanted to find from the minister when they went into the town, one thing they wanted to find was skill in leading groups of people to work out the definition of their own problems and to arrive at group decisions as to what they wanted to do. Secondly, that whatever goals he may have in his work, one of the foremost goals he must have is just that of leading the people in his community to a constantly higher conception of life.

Christ's Spirit in Every Day Life

MR. SANDERS: I haven't any right to talk here, but I should like to give you an idea what these students think about this thing. I have wondered if you are not building a church to suit yourselves. Someone asked, "How are we going to get these young men to the church?" Someone has asked, "How are we going to keep the young men and young women in the country?" You have not solved that problem yet by a long way, and if you have not solved it, we are going to solve it ourselves, if I may say that. We are through with creeds and doctrines. This is our religion, to put the spirit of Christ in our every day life. That is what religion is to us. That is what religion is going to be to the next generation if we have anything to do with it. Now, many of you are going to be dead and gone before this is accomplished. But some of you people are sitting here in the way of that thing. Let us be frank. Now, we have got to recognize this, that we have got to cast aside all forms, forget doctrines and get down to fundamental principles, the principles and teachings of Jesus Christ. What you will decide here I don't know. But I can tell you right now, what is going to happen in the next twenty-five years is that very thing. Decide what you please here, we are coming along behind you. We have made up our minds on that very thing and we are going to see it come to pass some day. I appreciate that you are willing to help us in every way you can. We appreciate that very much. But let us remember just that one thing, that that

is what we are going to try to do, to put the spirit of Christ in every profession, in everything we do.

Religion in Terms of Life on Farm

PROF. TAYLOR: I want to talk, and I think the young man who just spoke has started my talk. I think most of us recognize this thing, as Elliott must have recognized it himself, that when you try to sum up what religion is or what the spiritual forces are, you cannot be absolutely definitive, and therefore, I will plead guilty to that thing, too, at the beginning. But here is the viewpoint I want to throw into this discussion—not different; I am not trying to say it is different—but if we accept the thing which Elliott summed up for us, which Artman gave to us, it is life at the center, it is life we are concerned with. If you have ministers and grangers in the rural community, and all of the rest of us, working as leaders or in the ranks, isn't it worth while for us to visualize, "What is life on the farm?" I am thinking in concrete terms. I am thinking of people in North Carolina. I am thinking in terms of North Carolina, in terms of Missouri and Iowa, where I have lived. I am thinking concretely of the people down in northeastern North Carolina where they are producing cotton and tobacco. What is this life that we are going to put at the center, with which we want religion to do something? Then the preacher or these young people when they go out can take hold of the handle of this thing and then get somewhere with it.

Now, we must remember that the life of that farmer is made up of certain elements, and that there are about these two or three significant things.

One thing is, he is doing a technical job of production, just as the man in the factory is feeding the machine or taking the material away from it. He is in the job of growing crops and animals, handling soils, and things of that kind. That is what he is doing. That is what he must do.

Second, he is actually trying to convert his energies and the products of his soil and labor into money, because he lives in a society that is organized on a price and market basis, and he must have that money if he gets the wherewith of life.

With those two things in mind, where does religion hook on? I agree with Artman that it does not make any difference whether I am a preacher in the church or outside of the church, whether I am

a farmer or a granger or a social worker or trained in an agricultural college or trained in a theological seminary, I must first of all understand life, and life conditions. And life conditions on the farm are the conditions set by rural life, the occupations of rural life, the materials with which rural life works, soils, seasons, plants, animals.

If you are going to make religion concrete, you must then try to raise to this higher plane the nurture of plant and animal life, the control of soils, fitting into seasons, for those are the things that people do and have to do.

And it demands, therefore, that all people who would get any place in directing life on to this higher plane which we have said is religion, must know life, must know the processes by which life is lived on the farm, the technology and the economic processes. I do not know how I can make clear what I am trying to say.

You people in this house who have read that wonderful piece of rural literature, "The Growth of the Soil" will remember the last picture that is left in your mind, where the old Norwegian was out there prying away at the rock, a part of the soil itself, the zest of life, the whole harmony of life, in harmony with the rest of God's creation, prying away at that stone, talking to the stone itself. Man is a part of all creation, but he is a specific part of creation. His great business is farming and making money out of the farm, translating the dividends of farming into a part of life, as he has translated production into dividends.

I don't care whether you are a preacher or not. If you are, you must understand agriculture, you must understand economy and the social processes of life. I don't care whether you are a farmer or not. But if you are, you must understand the aspirations of life, the goals of life which true religion sets up. Therefore, I say in a concrete answer to what you are going to do with this problem that is before you, here are hundreds of us going back into rural life, hundreds of us going back into the theological seminaries, hundreds of us going back into the agricultural colleges. In our college curriculums, in our churches, in our granges, all of the places where we may be, as I see it—and categories can never adequately sum the thing—there are three elements in country life.

First, technical production. That is the job that must be done.

Second, translating production into economic dividends, must be done in the age in which you and I live. And, third, we people who believe in religion and we who are living the normal life must

some way or other put high ideals and their goals and inspirations and aspirations into the technical production and into the making of farm dividends. That is not concrete, but that is a thing Elliott had said we had agreed on.

Why, therefore, talk about the technical machinery of churches and bishops and of these other people so much, but why not talk about agriculture in terms of production, in terms of economic dividends translated into terms of an adequate life.

Some Words in Reply

PROF. ARTMAN: I want to beg your pardon for speaking so much. I want to answer the student from the seminary and I also want to answer Doctor Taylor. In the first place, to the student from the seminary, I should say: When you have studied a little longer you will not make a statement such as, "We are done with creeds and doctrines." As a matter of fact, when you discover a little bit further—and we have not all discovered it yet by any means; we are all on the road—you will find out that a creed is merely a landing point from which you make your next jump. Now, please don't say that because there are old-fashioned creeds which you do not like, you are done with all creeds which you do not like. You will go out and be a barnstormer in the community and not make a hole in it. About 98 per cent of human life works by habit and not by ideas. If you go out and use that expression you will find yourself defeated to begin with. You must follow the lines of custom and habit.

Now, again in the group discussion, someone spoke about discussion methods, saying that the minister ought to be able to lead people in discussion. Don't take a thrust at the preacher. Because people don't know how to preach is no reason why you should say all preaching is bad. I disagree very thoroughly with Mr. Linderman. Anyone who is a good preacher knows how to throw the line so that there is discussion going on. Any good preacher is always taking the live assets and causing them to be worked out in the process of his preaching, and the people in his hearing are doing that thing if he is a good preacher.

Now, the third point I want to make. I have traveled all over the United States and Canada, been in the rural work of the Y. M. C. A. and otherwise, and I have had from fifteen to twenty-five people doing work under me from the University for the past five

years. I know a little about the rural community. I do not claim to know everything. I know very little. But I do know a little. I want to say this to you, that I found a great many rural leaders trained in agricultural colleges, absolutely fizzles. They have learned in agricultural colleges how to work pig clubs and corn clubs, but not how to run human clubs. Just because your Agricultural College is so technical in its approach to agriculture you are liable to ruin your leader. I can count four of your Michigan men who have failed on that basis alone. They had corn clubs everywhere. They had pig clubs all over. But they did not have boy and girl clubs or human clubs. We want the person who is a past master in social spiritual organization and with sense enough to hit up to where the farmer is.

PROF. TAYLOR: I am not going to combat what Mr. Artman said. I am going to try to make clear the thing which I did not make clear, else he would not have assumed what he did. In the Agricultural College, I will say this to make it clear, that we ought to have the very thing Mr. Artman says we lack. I will go a hundred per cent with him. Put into our agricultural college curricula the thing that will prevent men from making those mistakes. But on the other hand I will say, put into our Divinity schools those things which will prevent just as big fizzles of folks who go out and understand nothing but theology and church matters.

MR. SANDERS: I just want to say that I thoroughly accept his definition of creed. Denominational creeds are what I was speaking of, not his creed.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION OF RELIGION FUNCTIONING IN LIFE

SUMMARY BY CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Will you notice that in these last minutes we have found the underlying reason for the confusion in the local community, and our confusion has been at this point: What really is religion and under what conditions does it function? Does it make a difference in behavior?

You are more or less agreed that religion is living life in all of its aspects, on the highest plane a community or an individual or a group knows, whether that be raising hogs or running a church. You have given illustrations from both sides. You have said a church could be run on a low plane in which the members would forget the community and look only after themselves. You have said that

you could run a farm on a low plane, where you put profits above anything else in the community. It has been said that the church up to the present time in many places has failed to make religion function in life, and one of the complaints has been that it has not been concerned with the affairs of life. It has been dealing—Mr. Sanders said it from one angle and two or three people said it from others—with other questions than those which make up the affairs of life, and, therefore, rather than helping people live life at its highest, it practically passed by life. You have said, however, on the other hand that people in the farmers' and other organizations have failed to live life at its best, because they have forgotten there also, that there was a spiritual aspect to it all. Seemingly you have come to this place. You have been saying that the church has put its emphasis upon the spiritual without reference to life, and has trained its ministers without reference to life conditions in the country—economics, raising hogs, running farms; and that the farmers' organization or the agricultural college sometimes has put its emphasis upon economics, upon getting better returns, and have forgotten this other; and that somehow or other we must see to it that the church does both and that the farm organization does both, and all of us work together on life as a whole; that the theological seminary will have to help rural ministers know the relation of religion to country life and how to make religion function in economics and that the agricultural college will have to help people who are going out to work on economics and farm matters, know how to put ideals into these affairs.

SUGGESTIONS ON AFTERNOON DISCUSSIONS

Now, are we not at the place in this Conference, where this afternoon in our groups we want to definitely get down to specific suggestions from both these approaches? Have we not come now to a realization that it is not a problem of the church, that it is not a problem of the Farm Bureau, that it is not a problem of the Grange, but is a problem growing out of the fact that each group is doing only a part of the work and we need all groups looking at life as a whole, and realizing its relationship to this country situation. That would mean that each group would have to find where in this total of activities it had failed to build life whole. The theological seminaries would have to look at it, the agricultural colleges would have

to look at it, the different groupings of people in the community would have to look at it.

A Word on the Process

Will you permit one very brief suggestion about the morning session. We came into this Conference this morning, all of us representatives of organizations or of particular aspects of country life. We saw the country community, we saw this problem from our approach and we had difficulty in seeing it through the approach of any other group. That means in spite of everything, that we do a good deal of preliminary talking before we get down to the real issues. Exactly the same thing will happen the first time you get the various factors in the local community together. You spend quite a time coming to understand each other. You had to spend an hour or an hour and a half of it before you could get down to business, because you had not been in the room and talked to each other before face to face. You have here repeated the process which will have to go on in community after community, for people of varying viewpoints have to understand each other before they can coöperate. You will be discouraged when you get together. You will feel a lot of time was wasted. At first we talked programs to be adopted. Each person will have something he wants to put over. But toward the last you will get down to business, as we got down to business and as I believe we can stay down to business for the rest of the Convention.

By and large in our education and in our community life up to the present time we have not been trained—I have not been trained and you have not been trained—to study situations and see how to solve them. We have been trained how to make programs and sell them. We are this morning trying to meet situations. This is very sobering. It is much easier to sell a program than to meet a situation. We are here facing the question as to whether it is possible in community life to pool resources and bring our thinking to bear upon the problem. That is a hard job. We are trying to learn it together and I believe it is worth trying to learn.

MONDAY AFTERNOON

MEETING BY GROUPS

On Monday afternoon, the Convention divided into ten groups to continue the discussion of the morning. These groups met at the same place and with one exception, with the same leaders as on Sunday morning. (See page 15.)

At the close of the morning session there was a meeting of the leaders and recorders with Chairman Elliott to plan the afternoon discussion in the light of the developments of the morning. The following was the suggested plan worked out and followed.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF MORNING SESSION

In the discussion this morning the group seemed to be agreed that—

1. If we are to have a real community consciousness the community must discover its plan, make its own program and determine its objectives. Groups with varying viewpoints must meet face to face to exchange ideas, form plans and actually work together in enterprises.

2. The emphasis in religion now needed most in the country is the earnest attempt to live all aspects of life at their highest and best. It is concerned with the whole of life.

This emphasis demands that religious organizations and religious programs shall directly give themselves to the problems and concerns that make up the farmers' life; and that farmers' organizations dealing with economic education and other problems, shall more directly give themselves to bringing out the spiritual values in these aspects of life.

QUESTIONS FOR AFTERNOON DISCUSSION BY GROUPS

In the light of these conclusions, we need to discover the most necessary changes in what is now being done.

1. In the two hours this afternoon to which of the following aspects of country life do we want to give attention, to discover what special changes would be necessary to meet this larger conception of religion.

a. Churches

b. Allied agencies
   Y. M. C. A.
   Y. W. C. A.
   Sunday Schools

c. Farm Organizations
   Farm Bureau
   Grange
   Grange Bureau
   Extension Workers

d. Social Agencies
   Scouts
   Girls' and Boys' Club Organizations
   Red Cross

e. Home

f. School

2. Taking these one by one, let us consider:

a. What items are now considered important in its activities or program (List these).

b. If you were going to take our morning conclusion with regard to the enlarged conception of community life and of the function of religion, what changes would be required in each item in the program? Why?

For instance:

Would you give it up altogether? Why?
Would you do it in a different way? How? Why?
Would you substitute something else? What? Why?

It was predicted that differences both as to fact and opinion would probably emerge in the afternoon session. If it were a difference as to what are the facts, then the group would seek evidence and try to reach mutual understanding and agreement as far as possible. If it were a difference of opinion as to what is desirable, then the group would seek reasons for these differences and discuss these.

3. Summary: On which of these changes are we all agreed? On which are there still differences and for what reasons?

A summary of the discussion in each group was dictated to the reporters at the close of the afternoon discussion by the recorder of each group; and the discussions were reported at the evening session. (For reports at the evening discussion see pages 93-102 and for recorders' summaries see pages 104-110.

MONDAY EVENING

SUGGESTED CHANGES IN RELIGIOUS PROGRAM IN THE COUNTRY

General Session for Consideration of Reports of Group Meetings

Chairman Elliott: Our business to-night according to the suggestion of the program committee is to attempt to gather up the work of to-day, to pool the results of the afternoon's discussions by groups, and together to find a consensus of opinion. We are not in any sense trying to pass resolutions or to make "findings" but we should like in the evening session to reflect so far as it is possible the best experience and conviction of this gathering on the programs that we discussed this afternoon.

You will remember that we came, at the close of the morning session, with two main questions really before us that seem to be the underlying ones for a number of these situations that we were facing:

1. The question of how a community should look at itself as a community, and see its problems from a community viewpoint, and how various organizations should make their contribution to this unified community life.

2. How can religion in the Community, in the Church, in the home, in farmers' organizations, in allied agencies, contribute to the living of life in the community on the very highest level it is possible for individuals and groups to live that life; what adjustments would be necessary in these various agencies and the approaches, if religion were really to function as that dynamic force, and if it were possible for those in the country to look upon life whole with religion dynamically a part?

To-night we are hoping that there may be suggestions and discussion, and a report from the various groups upon these items.

We are going to ask that the chairman and recorders of the groups be ready to make reports and that also every group-member be alert to make suggestions, as we attempt on several items to pool our results and to see really what is the best experience we can marshal, to take back with us to our various communities, and to pass on to friends who may read this report.

It was suggested by the leaders, and perhaps you will be willing to bear the chairman out in this suggestion, that the chairman be allowed to stop long speeches, and that we work together on rapid give and take. If I interrupt when I should not you as a group will protest and if I interrupt when I should you as a group will support me. Will that be fair? I shall not know at times whether I ought to or whether I ought not to. Let us just work together in the finest spirit and in the effort to try to make the best out of this evening that is possible.

As we got the reports of the leaders this afternoon it seemed that in the groups the question of church was given more attention than any other one aspect; so we shall with your consent deal first with the church and the changes in the church which may be necessary to meet this new day, and then after that give attention to whatever other items you may wish.

It will be quite possible to secure through the report, I know, a summary of all of the varying suggestions that were made in these groups. We have those available and they are already typed and ready for the report, but what we want to know is what this group feels are the most fundamental changes necessary if the church is to meet this new challenge of "Making religion function more thoroughly in the life of country communities, and raising that life to its highest levels."

That is, we cannot, after this Convention is over, do fifty things, but there may be three things that we could do in relation to the church—three or four or five things that we should say now by all means must be done. There may be twenty others that we should like to see done. What are these few; and perhaps we should also say what are the most fundamental changes necessary first, and then ask later what other improvements there are?

Did you in your groups this afternoon face up to any aspects of the life of the church in which you felt fundamental changes must be made if the church in the country is to meet the challenge which you put to it to-day in relation to religion? Are there suggestions?

REPORTS FROM GROUPS AND DISCUSSION OF PROPOSALS

Leadership

MR. FOSTER OF GROUP 4: The first need is leaders recognizing their functions in the church and who can lead and undertake.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: How did the group feel that this would help the church meet its new duty? What was the emphasis?

MR. FOSTER: Well, the main emphasis was that the leader would be wide awake to the problems which his community as a whole had, and if they were awakened to the fact they would get back of it.

MR. MATHEWS: Group 9 used the phrase "The Minister must be a social engineer to make contact with all the other social organizations in the community and so to bring the church's influence to bear."

MISS SAMSON: Group 8 thought better pastor's work was necessary and this means a resident minister and a longer pastorate.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Are there any objections or suggestions? Did any group make a counter-proposal that this was not the way to go at it? But at the present moment we should say that one thing is essential; viz., a different type of leader and an increase in the number of leaders of the kind we want.

MISS ROSS: Group 3 felt that we must have a minister who will develop leadership.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: What is a second change suggested by the groups as necessary in the church if it is to meet this new situation?

Changes in Preaching Service

MR. LIVELY: Our group felt that there should be a change in preaching.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: What did they say they thought would be necessary to be changed?

MR. LIVELY: Make it individual and social with specific application to problems like war; give it relatively a smaller space by better physical and psychological preparation for the service and a grouping of the people.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: What did they mean by that last suggestion?

MR. LIVELY: I don't know just exactly what was meant by physical preparation so much as psychological preparation. I think the idea was better preparation from the standpoint of knowledge as well as a division of audience into age groups.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: What would your group say as to a smaller amount of time given to preaching?

MR. LIVELY: Either by reducing the amount of preaching or increasing the amount of other activities.

One concrete suggestion was made that a forum sometimes be introduced, the minister giving his views and then the laymen giving their views on the same program.

MR. CAMPBELL: Group 5 rather felt that we needed even less preaching—not only relatively but actually. (Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Were there any groups in which there was an objection to this point of view? We ought to get both points of view very frankly. There were four suggestions: (a) that there should be specific application in preaching to current problems—war was mentioned as one; (b) actually or relatively less preaching; (c) a division of the audience; and (d) a more careful background and preparation psychologically. Were there any groups in which any of these points were objected to? I think there must have been as I listened in different rooms. Was there any objection in your group, Miss Bailey?

MISS BAILEY: There wasn't anything said about the quantity of it. It was all on quality.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: What was said on quality?

MISS BAILEY: That it should be a thoroughly spiritual and positive message, should be balanced and directed, as this gentleman said, to the every day situation; the minister must be thoroughly trained, having a scientific education, so that he would have a feeling of what growth is. That came out in a discussion of Modernism.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Now, quite without reference to these groups would any of you make a counter-proposition to this? I am persuaded that this does not represent the entire sentiment of the groups.

MISS SAMSON: I don't see how you can have a division of a lot of these country audiences when they are so small to begin with. The suggestion is given there that there be a division in the audience. I don't see what they had in mind when the average preaching audience is so small that you cannot divide it—as at most there will be only twenty-five or thirty. Then to have a preaching service for eight or ten children or six or eight grown people, if that is what they had in mind, it would seem to me there would be a difficulty, although I do not know what they had in mind.

Mr. Pennoyer: I think I made the suggestion. I had in mind the children that do not stay for the service, and we want some service, some teaching for them and then I had in mind the young people in relation to the forum idea.

Mr. Adams (Of Group 1): Our group brought out the fact that out in the country the young folks will stay for the church service whether they are included in the service or not. There should be provision in the regular service for these young people, because the pastor with three or four churches to take care of can't possibly hold several separate services. It would be better for him to spend part of the sermon period in a message for the young people, and the other part for the older folks.

Miss Samson: Group 8 thought the amount of preaching should be limited and at the same time they put emphasis on the service of worship.

Chairman Elliott: On what ground, Miss Samson, was it they thought it would help make religion better in country life?

Miss Samson: They gave that as an illustration of the way the program might be developed. One of the men said that he heard a sermon yesterday that was an hour long and if he could always hear sermons like that he would be willing to hear them; but when men could not preach, he did not see why anyone should listen to them.

Mrs. Schuttler: There is also suggested a "forum comeback."

Chairman Elliott: How many here have had any experience in a forum in connection with the sermon, giving a chance to come back at the preacher? What experience in that?

A Delegate: I have had people come together again and talk over the sermon and I should say here that the sermon should be cheerful and the preacher should talk only about those things which will be interesting to his hearers. But there is no need of a sermon being changed for the children and the old folks. It should be interesting to everybody and if it is not interesting to the children it is not worth preaching at all. But the people should always have a chance to "come back" by a meeting afterwards.

Chairman Elliott: Would you say just a word more and tell us what happens at these "comebacks"?

A Delegate: Well, it is fine to talk over things that have happened since the last service and things that have happened in the country. I have had a man come to me and say, "Why, I thought

you would talk about this and you never told us a thing about it." So we had all to go back into the church and sit down and have a big confab over those things that we had not taken up, because at each church session we plan to touch upon everything that has happened in the country, in the neighborhood or in the town, because we know that sooner or later it will be touched upon.

MISS HARRIS: A minister in this group told me that forty-eight of his people had been coming around to his house once a week, discussing various social issues and he said they got so interested in it that they remained until eleven o'clock in the evening, and it had the effect of making them late in the morning. He said if he did something they did not approve of, they would come back at him at the following meeting.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: They helped him prepare his sermon, then? Any other suggestions or are you united on this?

MR. HULETT: I believe in order to reach the young people, that the preaching must be modern in the sense that it will be in harmony with scientific discovery. May I say also, if there was not any sermon at all, everyone would be just as well off and probably better off.

MR. WATSON: There were two suggestions that came out of our group. One was of a minister who suspended his sermons for two weeks while he made the rounds of his town, a city of fair size, calling on the people and talking with them upon the topics of the times. He gave all of his time every day to doing that, every day of the week, and he felt they were two of the most profitable weeks that he had spent there.

Another suggestion was that they substituted for the preaching service, a good many times, pageantry, and other kinds of drama, art and music. I wonder if there are not people here who have had experience in that program and who are able to make suggestions along that line?

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Shall we understand that we are united on the following proposals in regard to preaching: (a) sermons that deal with current questions and matters of concern to farm life; (b) sermons to have actually a smaller part in the total and that there ought to be more willingness to substitute forums and to make other adjustments in the preaching service as needs may develop; (c) some way for a division of the audience or an adaptation of the sermon to the younger members of the audience and

then every person will be reached; (d) suggestion for pageantry and music; (e) either during the week or in the following service a chance to get in touch with the people and let them have their comeback, which would mean that the preacher would have a better sermon and that the people would get more out of it if there was that chance for a comeback in some way.

Is there any other aspect in the running of the church that you would like to say fundamentally ought to be changed if the church is to be made just what you all imagine it should be in the new day.

Mr. Stewart: Mr. Chairman, I have found it helpful at the beginning of new work to distribute to every member of the congregation an envelope asking them for suggestions as to morning and evening service and criticism of what they have already heard. I found that quite helpful in a number of places. I have been preaching for thirty years.

(Note: For further suggestions on Preaching and Worship made in the afternoon group discussions, see pages 104-105.)

Religious Education

Chairman Elliott: Now, may we hear further from the Committees?

Mr. Sanderson: Group 8 felt that religious education should not consist merely of instruction but should consist of activities, developing habits. This would involve club work of various kinds which might be under the church or merely stimulated by and supported by the church.

Mr. Lively: Group 6 advised that there be more religious education in opening and closing exercises, or perhaps, more religious education in the church and Sunday School and less opening and closing exercises.

Various suggestions from other groups followed:

That the objection to opening exercises would be overcome if we talk about the service of worship as the centralized part of religious education; that worship be made something worthy of the name and not something with a second-hand organist and a second-hand choir; and that the Sunday School worship should come out of the daily life of the children. It was suggested further that the church should take the lead in providing recreational facilities for these young people.

MR. RAMSDELL: There is one more to add, that we scrap these formal courses of study and adapt the course of study to the group and the specific situation. The minister and superintendent can study the group and work out a course of study that fits the need of that group of children.

MR. FELTON: I had about the same thing to report. Someone suggested that local teachers or pastors experiment in working out intelligent Bible study, applying the Christian principles to the local needs.

MR. MACLAREN: I was just wondering whether anyone here at all, when he is thinking of working out intelligent Bible study, would have in mind any place where the whole of the religious group are working together under forms of religious education like they have in Canada. In Canada seven different denominations, together with the Y. M. C. A., have the same type of work for their adolescent young people.

We have got it fairly well worked out. I don't know any other place where all of the organizations have worked out the same program together, doing in a very definite way, a number of these things that you have spoken of here. They have taken the trouble to have the very best agencies, and the leaders in the church to work together to decide what it is that they want to do with their boys and girls; they have adopted a program that actually works.

MR. ADAMS: Group 1 brought out this fact that the program for this instruction should be of such a type that the pupils should progress from the Sunday School into the church without the necessity of having lost time.

MR. CHASSELL: Group 9 members suggested week-day religious education. I am not sure as to the distinction between that and club work as suggested by Mr. Sanderson's group.

Further suggestions were made as to the possibilities of club activities and as to the difficulty of getting what is learned put into practice.

Another person reported two other elements: One was the introduction of instruction in religious education in the country school, and the other one was the observance of some night in the church program in which all the family had different graded activities on that one night, getting the family together in the church.

MISS ZOAR: I was wondering where we should get our leadership for that club work? How are we going to furnish that?

MISS SAMSON: We must train them by including teacher training in the program of religious education.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: We will pass on unless you have some specific examples of the influence of activities on character.

PROF. EARP: I can give one in our own Sunday school. Our pupils were accustomed to exchange presents on birthdays or other special occasions. But we have made arrangements by which children less fortunately situated receive birthday cards, candy, books and other gifts. In this specific way the pupils are being trained to look out for some one who is less privileged than they are. The work is done not by giving the pupils something, but getting them to give or do something.

MR. MACLAREN: Since 1902 denominations in Canada have been working together and have worked this program out. It is not simply on paper, it is being actually worked out by the boys and girls.

In every Province in the Dominion of Canada just now at the present time one of the activities is the carrying out of this instruction into actual practice.

In the Province of Ontario just now are being held elections for the boys' Parliament, representing the boys and young men of the Christian churches of the Province of Ontario. They will assemble during Christmas week in the City of Toronto and hold their meetings in the legislative chamber there and will discuss, themselves, without being given any adult direction behind-the-scenes just what action ought to be taken to develop the Christian life amongst the boys.

Last year at the meeting it was decided by themselves that they should raise $6,000 amongst the boys of the Province of Ontario to promote this work, and they laid the plans themselves, organized under a finance minister, planned the whole thing, mapped out the Province, appointed their members in the different sections of the Province to oversee it. A boy about nineteen years of age went up and down that Province stimulating the local members and they put across the program inside of two weeks and they raised not $6,000 but $9,000 for the work of those boys, and in all that they were learning their responsibility to the community and they were actually putting across, not mock programs but a real program, planning the work for the Christian boys and in the Christian spirit. A boys' council has acted to secure safe bathing facilities,

sleigh-riding and coasting, and has provided policemen to supervise. It prevented the city from granting a franchise to private ownership by looking up the facts. Now these are illustrations of what can be done.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: The point to all of this as I understand it in these last few minutes has been that the boys and girls are learning Christian responsibility and Christian attitude.

MR. O. E. BRADFUTE: Mr. Chairman, it does not seem to me that we are getting at the root of this whole matter. Only yesterday I talked with a beloved County School Superintendent who made the survey in 1922 of one of the richest agricultural counties in the State of Ohio and one of the most highly educated. He made a survey of the children going to church and he found as a result of that survey that 58 per cent. of the children in the country of that county had not entered a church or a Sunday School during that year. Their parents were not better than the children.

Now, folks, it doesn't matter what kind of preaching you have in your churches, you are not going to appeal to your own boys and girls or those parents unless you go at it in some other way. I am not inclined to condemn all of the preachers on the pastorates, but I want to put the blame where it seems to me it belongs. It belongs on me—on you and you and you. It is up to us, as I see it, those of us who believe in the church and the work of the church, to reach those people directly and to get busy on our job.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: I am sorry to stop these suggestions, but we must close this part of the discussion. The emphasis in the latter part of the discussion seems to be on a program of religious education growing out of the life of children and young people and consisting of the sharing of responsibilities in the church and the community.

(Note: For further suggestions on Religious Education from the afternoon groups see pages 105-107.)

A DELEGATE: I should like to call attention to one suggestion that was passed over lightly. Someone said the boys should be brought to Sunday school in their natural groups. I wonder if it is going to be necessary for a little town with two or three churches to have two or three Sunday schools. I think one reason why the boys do not come to Sunday school is because during the week they are coming together in a business way from Monday morning

school until Saturday afternoon swimming hole time, and on Sunday they are together out of the churches. I wonder if it would be possible for one community to coöperate on one good Sunday school and then you would have the boys and girls with you.

Special Suggestions for Home Training and Absentee Pastors

MRS. CLEAVER: From group 4 after considerable discussion there came the thought that parents are able to render special help in religious education.

MISS BAILEY: I want to say just a word on that, that the child spends the greater part of his life in the home and that there should be much more emphasis placed upon the training in the home, and that the parents need help along that line, for when the children get to High School they can't even say the Ten Commandments or the Twenty-third Psalm, as some one reported. And not only religious training is needed, but there was suggested in a broad sense, moral training in the home.

I want to ask the question, who is going to do all of this training? I made a survey of ten counties, and I found in the ten counties there were only thirteen resident pastors, 127 absentee pastors—or no pastors at all. Now, to carry out the program that we have outlined in the last half hour it is going to take a solid basis. What I am trying to get into my mind is what I shall carry back—three or four concrete suggestions from this discussion—that I can give to twenty-five absentee pastors in the county, where there is no possibility whatever of having resident pastors in half the places, at least.

MR. GILBERT: May I say a word on absentee pastors? I have worked on it fifteen years. The absentee pastor can do a lot of good. For one thing, in making a visit he can be a stimulus and a help. He comes into homes and he may stay long enough to amount to something; it is better to go there once a month and do a good job and go home than only to come in and out, preach and not stop a minute. He must stay there long enough to do some good. If he comes in for Sunday and stays a while he cannot call on the people, but they can call on him and stay in church five hours when they do come there. That is our regular time, five hours for our church. Then we all eat dinner together; everybody eats together, then after church we ask about the social activities, when and where and who is going to lead them. The best use you can ever make

of the church is in social recreation in the open country where they are busy in farm life all the week.

A DELEGATE: I should like to make a suggestion on that absentee pastor, that you organize an adult training class to take charge of this work. It has been done in a number of places and actually works when he is gone.

MR. SANDERSON: Group 8 felt that missions should include missions in the parish welfare work.

MR. GILBERT: Mr. Chairman, may I say a word on this? I have been enabled to remodel two open country churches and I should be willing to talk with anybody who would like to make any suggestion as to what may be accomplished in remodeling inexpensively, an old-fashioned open country church.

A DELEGATE: Mr. Chairman, on church visitation, the pastoral visitation should be changed somewhat; instead of making it a chicken-eating visit or a visit of that kind it should have a certain purpose. One man in group No. 7 suggested a community survey and there were several suggestions, but you do not want them now.

SUGGESTIONS ON OVERCHURCHING

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: There is one other item that we ought to spend a few moments on perhaps. It was the third item we were supposed to have discussed this morning, but did not have time: the whole question of what ought to be done with other church denominational units. We have more churches than can be supported in the community. That question was started this morning. Do you want to discuss this problem for a little time this evening?

The question of the federated church and too many poorly supported churches in the country came up for discussion and speakers advanced many unfavorable conditions existing, but a constructive solution of the problem did not seem to have been presented.

MR. MAGEEY: The federated type of church in a good many places is working admirably. We find two things in connection with those churches. One is that it is a great deal easier to bring about a consolidation where the denominations involved are congregational in their government. Where there is an overhead official denominational organization which perhaps controls the property, and so on, it is much more difficult to bring it about.

MR. BURR: I have in mind small towns where denominations, two or three in each community engaged in such a prolonged fight over a period of years, that no one of them has continued any work in the community regularly for a considerable period. In one community that has been true for twenty years. Therefore, a whole generation has grown up in that American town, for it is strictly an American town in this case, without any regular religious leadership. Now, if anybody suggests having one of the denominations that used to be there come in and do a piece of work, the people still remember the old-time fight and they will all run for the woods the minute you send a man of that kind in. They are afraid of the denomination, and they have a right to be from the way they have been treated along that line. I want to say the rest of what I said yesterday afternoon that I am decidedly in favor of denominational fellowship. I think it is good in such a community.

I am not condemning the office of the official, frankly I am condemning the official, because I think in communities of this kind—and there are many of them in the United States—we are driving off and out of them any religious leadership on account of the denominational fight a few years ago.

I think the thing that is needed is what has been suggested here again and again, two or more denominational organizations coming together and sending in an unprejudiced person representing them, to give those people a community church, and helping them organize it without any strings to it at all, as a definite piece of missionary work on the part of the churches' overheads concerned.

Doctor Lamb then suggested four ways the situation of overchurching is being met:

1. The people of a community gravitating to one church in the community, thus making it overwhelmingly the strongest.
2. Division of territory between the big denominations so only one is represented in a community.
3. Federated Church.
4. Community church with no denominational affiliations.

Discussion revealed that the Convention considered No. 2 the most desirable with 3 and 4 next in desirability.

ADDITIONAL PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING RELIGIOUS LIFE IN THE COUNTRY

SUGGESTIONS FROM MONDAY AFTERNOON GROUP MEETINGS NOT REPORTED MONDAY EVENING

Only such suggestions out of the group records as did not receive full attention in the evening session are given here. The material is grouped by topics.

The Preaching and Worship Service

Public worship should provide a wider opportunity for meditation and quiet. (Group 4.)

Worship must be used as a means for spiritualizing agricultural and social relationships in the country. The type of hymns used must tend to this end. Also congregational singing will help. Worship is often used merely as an introduction to preaching. This should be changed. Worship must be used because children naturally use this form of religious expression. There should be more democratic expression in worship. (Group 5.)

Ways by which preaching may be improved:

(*a*) It should be in line with topics that are being discussed in the community.

(*b*) Schools for ministers.

1. At the agricultural college.
2. Inter-denominational.
3. Summer.

(*c*) Minister take rural life papers and material and bulletins on agriculture.

(*d*) Agricultural college hunt up the minister and take agricultural information to him.

(*e*) Minister join farm organizations.

(*f*) Overhead boards withdraw denominational support from misfits.

(*g*) Change the form and content of the evening sermon so that people will participate.

(*h*) Draw out the ethics of civic activity. (Group 7.)

The question was raised as to the possibility of doing away with preaching and what substitution could be made. The group seemed

to agree that there was too much emphasis on preaching but felt that preaching should be continued as an activity of the church while at the same time the program of worship should be developed. An illustration of the way this worship program might be developed was given. The men in a certain community had a vesper service in the school on Sunday afternoon in which a pageant was given with much worshipful music. The audience did not participate in the pageant, but it was felt there was genuine worship. One pastor thought that the church should make use of light effects in developing the spirit of worship. The group agreed that better music should be used. One pastor suggested the possibility of employing a music teacher who would rotate from church to church. (Group 8.)

Back of the worship service must be an adequate external equipment, a more artistic environment, better music, ventilation and sanitation. Pastors need a recognized program of preaching which will grow out of community needs. Some steps toward this are summer schools of training, reading courses, changes in the present theological education, especially emphasis upon rural attitudes and methods. (Group 10.)

Religious Education

There should be a single central administration for all the churches' activities in religious education and the entire program of the church.

There should be graded religious instruction, worship and activities, with special recognition of the child's needs and interests. (The worship program should give consideration to the junior sermon and special features for children in the general service.)

The program should be of such a type that the individuals will progress from the Sunday School into the Church without the necessity of being lost from the former to be won back to the latter. (Group 1.)

It was suggested that most Sunday Schools fail to attract children because in conducting the services a minister or the superintendent, as the case may be, creates a dull and uninteresting atmosphere.

It was suggested that the selection of the course of study for our Sunday School by minister or superintendent should be made independently of denominational affiliations, that the minister or superintendent should study the needs of his children, or better, of the

children in his groups and get the course of study that fits their needs. It was pointed out that freedom to do this is limited in some denominations because the money obtained from the sale of literature is devoted to such worthy causes as the pensioning of worn-out ministers and that under such circumstances a minister naturally would feel that he must not withhold his contribution to such a fund by not using such literature. It was pointed out that most Sunday School superintendents and many pastors do not know enough to decide upon a course of study and that in many other situations the course of study is determined by a lay committee.

With regard to instruction in the Sunday School, it was suggested that a teacher must make the Bible the practical help in life for the child rather than merely a reference book supplementing the course of study; that the teacher should interpret the Bible rightly through stories. There was a fairly general agreement that the denominational course of study should not be followed exclusively in the Sunday School, not quite so general an agreement that any formal course of study should be eliminated, and complete agreement that the primary emphasis in Sunday School instruction should be placed upon the interpretation of the Bible to the child through the story.

More generally on the question of how to get Sunday School influence into the conduct of the child, it was pointed out that if children could be brought into Sunday School in their natural play groups or gangs the Sunday School life would be much more interesting and vital to them because they would then be studying side by side with every-day playfellows. The denominational Sunday Schools take them out of their natural play groups and throw them into classes with other children who are practically strangers. On the other side of this it was pointed out that the public schools are establishing fellowships along lines which cut across the natural play group and that the Sunday School should be able to build on this public school fellowship. Finally it was suggested that the content of Sunday School instruction should come out of the daily life of the child. (Group 2.)

A social recreational program:

(*a*) The church should stimulate and promote social activities.

(*b*) It must maintain ideals.

(*c*) The whole question of questionable recreational and social activities depends on the prevailing ideals which people have.

(*d*) The church must maintain the ideals that are worth while. (Group 4.)

The Home

The Home should cease to become a filling station and become a representation of all the best in life. The home must be the maturing place of the child. A home must be an example of democracy rather than autocracy in its method of government. Individual relationships in the family should be those of pals. The home needs a revised expression of family religion so that children may get training in religious expression. Cultural views must become strong in the home—such views as hospitality, the use of good literature, the appreciation of nature. The business side of family life must be idealized; that is, a square deal should be given to the soil and to tenant labor. (Group 5.)

Public Schools

Week day religious education should be taken up by the public schools. When all the denominations join in this we have a very much larger conception of religion. Schools should use dramatic presentation of the Bible. There should be the teaching of social science as required subjects in preparatory schools for these enlarged conceptions of life. Teaching of comparative religions would lead to tolerance. The teaching of war glorification in history should stop. Schools should so supervise recreational activity that enlarged conceptions of life will result. The work of the Parent-Teachers Association should be magnified by the school. The school program is so full at present that there must be changes to make room for some of the more important subjects of life such as social science. (Group 5.)

Church and Community

(1) The Church should take the lead, if necessary, in getting other groups together to provide adequate recreation for all people in the community;

(2) A denominational church ought not to try to corner the recreational work of the community nor even to dominate it, but should endeavor to bring about the establishment of such work under the auspices of a group representative of the entire community;

(3) In cases where other denominations refuse to enter a co-

operative movement in which one church had taken the lead, that church should go ahead with the proposed project, keeping it open to everybody in the community;

(4) Preaching in the church should apply the gospel specifically to the needs of the community;

(5) The minister should be open-minded toward all situations in the community and so be able to approach any group of any community sympathetically and to lead them to see where they fit into the whole life of the community;

(6) The minister in the country must have a knowledge of agricultural processes. (Group 2.)

First of all, the suggestion was made that in many communities it was necessary that the churches unite in order to serve natural grouping, the point being brought out that young people, especially, do not group together according to denominations. The advantages of this were listed as follows:

(*a*) For the benefit of the younger people;
(*b*) To produce a richer social life;
(*c*) To support adequate ministerial leadership;
(*d*) To establish better finances;
(*e*) To produce better church standing;
(*f*) More efficient religious education;
(*g*) Better equipment;
(*h*) A greater inspiration from meeting in larger groups;
(*i*) Because a divided church is contrary to the teaching of Jesus.

Attention of the group was called to the fact that many of these statements were far-reaching and needed real thought.

Another point in the ideal church was an extension program which would include people who might not be able to reach the church services and also would include phases of church life rather separate or more extended than the ordinary activities carried on in the building.

A third phase was the necessity for finer leadership of two kinds, ministerial and a lay leadership, which a strong minister should develop.

A fourth point which was brought out in the latter part of the discussion was that the church should encourage other agencies to make use of its buildings. (Group 3.)

The group decided that the missionary program is essential for

the life of any church. They thought that an effort ought to be made to bring men into missionary activities as they are not at the present time. Some suggestions for getting men interested were: Using mission pictures and literature. The forum for discussing mission problems. Some missionary activity as, for example, that of the Y. M. C. A. group in Michigan where the boys have paid for seven years the salary of a man to do rural work in India.

It was emphasized that the church needs to reinterpret missions to include its own community. Examples of this were, first, an automobile accident to colored people where it was impossible for them to get any assistance for about two hours; second, in Lexington County it is easy to raise money for foreign missions but very difficult to get anything to aid people in that community; third, a Protestant church in South Jersey in the midst of an Italian community not willing to admit Italians to its fellowship; fourth, Church in Windsor County, Vermont, oblivious to social needs, leaving that work to the Red Cross. Here it was pointed out that this might be legitimate inasmuch as the Red Cross was there to handle the social needs. It was decided that a program of missionary activities should include suggestions of things to be done to meet local needs.

There was some discussion as to whether the church ought to try to do any club work when the county agent can do it. Some of the group felt that the various community clubs do not contribute to the religious education of children. The group rather agreed that if a church felt club activity was necessary for their children they would see to it that good leaders were in charge of community clubs. They felt that the church should support some form of club work in the community.

One member of the group said that after all it came back to the survival of the fittest, that if one church in the community put on a program that appealed to the community it would receive the support of the community. He gave as an illustration a pastor going to a town where there had been five churches; within a year he had built and dedicated a $42,000 building. The statement was made that he got as high as a thousand dollars from another denomination and that the other churches were dying out. The question was raised as to whether the community was unified by this procedure. The man who gave the illustration thought that it was. (Group 8.)

Religion in Other Community Organizations

The community function of the Farm Bureau was also discussed. Its present functions were listed as follows:

Education concerning better farm methods, the securing of better marketing facilities, the development of coöperation among farmers, the development of social life including boys' and girls' clubs, the development of coöperative buying and help in better farm and home practices. Since most of these were desirable for the ideal functions of a farm bureau the group suggested that they should be continued and the following emphasis be added:

1. A Christian emphasis in the program of the bureau.

2. Stronger coöperation with all other agencies. A special emphasis was laid on the necessity for coöperation with religious programs.

3. The use of church equipment for meetings, etc., wherever possible.

4. The development of leadership, and here the point was brought out and found enthusiastic approval that there should be more give and take of leadership between churches and other agencies. The group felt that one of the greatest problems faced by a rural community in which there are other social agencies than the church is the lack of willingness to work together and the frequent failure of other agencies to realize the value of the minister. (Group 3.)

The Grange, Farm Bureau, boys' and girls' clubs, extension work, farmers' clubs, were discussed with the following suggestions agreed upon:

(*a*) The interests and attitudes of farm organizations in the community should be pooled.

(*b*) There should be community meetings for discussion of objectives.

(*c*) Community operations should start with obvious common needs, leading to the doing of some concrete thing.

(*d*) A State Council which would operate over all the communities in the State would help create the attitude of working together.

(*e*) State workers have been trained entirely along specialization lines, they need more social training.

(*f*) It is necessary in all of these organizations that no workers shall look down upon the farmers as though the workers had come there to uplift the farmer. (Group 10.)

TUESDAY MORNING

WAYS AND MEANS OF HELPING RELIGIOUS LIFE IN THE COUNTRY

Session by Responsibility Groups

Chairman Elliott: May I just for a moment before we break up into groups indicate our plan for the morning? It was agreed last evening that we should this morning divide into responsibility or occupational groups. Those with similar responsibilities would meet together this morning.

May I remind you again of the suggestion which was made in last evening's session, that frequently conventions of this kind come to a high-water mark of emotion and enthusiasm and conviction, as I think we did last night, and then go home without stopping to consider plans and all that is involved in carrying out the things which they wish to do. Each mile they get nearer home the surer they are that what happened at the Convention was really very fine, but they never could hope to put the suggestions into practice, and this, because no effort was made to work out plans and adjustments. Further, they go home quite out of fellowship with other people struggling in the same general problem, with no chance for a close relationship, and when they get off the train they almost wish that they hadn't decided that certain things were desirable and should be carried out by them.

We purposely planned to-day to arrange the program to reinterpret our conclusions into terms of responsibility and how to put them back into country life and into denominational groups and into the organizations with which we are associated.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER IN GROUP SESSIONS

Aren't these the questions upon which we want to work this morning?

1. Of the changes suggested, which do we feel are the most important? What changes do we think have come to us during this conference, or what suggestions that are the most important?

2. Following up our discussion of yesterday as to the changes that would make religion function more fully in country life, what are the immediate steps that we are going to take to put these changes into effect?

3. What are some of the difficulties we are likely to meet? Ought we not to take stock of them here rather than to wait until we get back home? What are some of the difficulties we are likely to meet and how are we going to meet them?

Could we say that this morning we are really dealing in the spirit of the day on ways and means? We have been talking up to the present time of what we should like to do. We have not dealt with the ways and means of doing it and our whole attention this morning is really a question of ways and means by which we shall work on these questions.

I do not mean that any group must slavishly follow this set of questions, but it did seem perhaps that when you got to ways and means you might have just two questions always, What and How? Are those not the two words that always come? What are we going to do? What steps are we going to take? What are we actually going to do and how are we going to do it?

Can we not here, on the matter of ways and means, pool our resources, help one another just as we have been doing it in determining what we wanted to do?

DECISION AS TO RESPONSIBILITY GROUPS

In response to the chairman's question, the following "responsibility groups" were suggested from the floor of the Conference. These were listed upon the blackboard, and effort was made to make sure that every person felt represented in one of the vocational groups. The list as finally approved was:

Rural Pastors—Leader, Prof. Felton.
Church Executives—Leader, Dr. Dana.
Religious Educators—Leader, Miss Moon.
Residents of the Open Country—Leader, Mr. White.
"Community Church" Leaders—Leader, Dr. Jordan.
Y. M. C. A., Y. W. C. A. and Social Workers—Leader, Prof. Ramsdell.

College Teachers of Rural Life, County Agents, and Leaders in Home Economics—Leader, Prof. Taylor.

Teachers in Theological Seminaries—Leader, Professor Dawber.

These groups were in session from 10:30 A.M. until 12:30 P.M. Immediately following the sessions, a recorder from each group dictated a summary of the findings of the group. While many of these findings came out informally in the general summary meeting, held during the afternoon, supplementary reports for many of the groups may be found on pp. 118-119.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON

WAYS AND MEANS OF HELPING RELIGIOUS LIFE IN THE COUNTRY

Consideration of Reports from Responsibility Groups

After a song service, the invocation was offered by Miss Clark.

Chairman Elliott: We have come to the summary meeting so far as this discussion together is concerned. May I remind you that we spent our first day on situations, and found two or three varieties of difficulties? First, there were difficulties in situations around a community approach and spirit. Second, there was that whole problem in regard to religion functioning actually in the life of the community, making a difference in the way the farmer lived and the way he looked at life. Third, we found difficulties centering around denominational divisions. Then the second day we considered proposals on the way out. Methods were proposed by which there would be community give and take, discussion, get-together, looking at things together, planning together. Second, you made proposals in regard to making religion function more adequately. And when we were dealing with this question of religion functioning, we found that we disagreed as to what we meant by religion. Out of the discussion we were willing to make one emphasis in this Conference, not in any way saying it was a complete one, that religion was life lived at its fullest and at its best. We discussed what changes there would be in the church and in various other aspects of rural life, if religion were to function in that fashion. And lastly, we gathered all those results up in a number of suggestions which we described as "religion not functioning as it might," and proposals that might make religion function better.

To-day we have divided up by responsibility groups to work on ways and means, on what we were going to do and how we were going to do it. And this afternoon we want to hear reports of these various ways and means, and what has been happening in these

particular groups. I believe we should like to hear, just to set the stage for us, from the group of rural folks. This group said that they were really from the farm. Who is speaking for that group?

Residents of the Open Country

The following are the resolutions worked out by the group composed of residents of the open country:

"Whereas we believe in the essential *dignity* and *worth* of the farmer's life, that he has a unique *contribution* to make to the national and international life, and that socialized and trained leadership of country life must come from *within* the group itself, we recommend the following:

1. Stress the nurture of religion in the home.

2. We feel the place of religion in life is to relate events of every day tasks not only to earning a livelihood but to living itself.

3. We are in favor of such recreational activity on Sunday as will make for Christian character.

4. We favor reorganization, if necessary, and readjustment of the rural church so that it will express itself effectively in its religious activities in the community.

5. We favor a subsidization of a rural community that cannot adequately support this religious activity.

6. We recommend the use of some such measurements of community life as indicated in the West Virginia score card."

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Now we shall leave these items on the board if you are willing before we go to discussion of them, because several of these will be approached from other angles as we shall go along, and you will want to ask the committee of rural folks, as we called them yesterday, some further questions, as we proceed. However, there was another group that had another viewpoint of the subject, the group made up of Agricultural College Professors and Extension Secretaries.

The first point that they were working on this morning was, "How can the agricultural forces put spiritual elements into the community; how can those that are actually approaching the community from the agricultural point of view see to it that this dynamic that we are talking about shall be specifically and definitely a part of the total life of the country?"

I ought to say that all of this material is being put in the record and we are gathering it together this afternoon that we may share in fellowship what happened this morning and not for the clerical side of it. It is all being dictated and is in a stenographic record in a fuller form than we shall be able to get this afternoon. But I think in our fellowship together we get a sense of give and take more than we should waiting to read it into the record. Dr. Galpin is going to report for the College Teachers of Rural Life, the County Agents, and the leaders in Home Economics, their feeling as to how those who work primarily from the agricultural viewpoint would put spiritual elements into the community.

What the College of Agriculture Can Do

MR. GALPIN: The College of Agriculture in a sense is the intellectual center of the agricultural community in the state. Hitherto, perhaps until the admission of home economics into the curriculum, it might be said that the whole aim of the College of Agriculture might be summed up in the statement or in the ideal, to make two dollars grow where one dollar had grown before. They aimed to teach the young farmer in the school and the old farmer in the extension work how he could make a new dollar of profit. Now, perhaps that is putting it a little strong. But I think that the public, that great public which does not discriminate carefully the educational ideal, nor consider carefully the importance of the product in the state or in the nation in the interests of the consumer, thinks that the college has stood and stands very largely to-day as a technique for making a profit of a new dollar to the farmer.

Now, it is believed by those that represent the Department of Rural Sociology, which is slowly coming in all of these colleges, that the Dean and the President and the Faculty can supplement in particular this ideal of the new dollar of profit. Heretofore, the college has given the farmer too little help on the problem of turning the profit into mental, material and spiritual goods. The challenge that is put up to the college is this: Is it certain that the farmers of this country can turn their dollar, new or old, into the goods of religion when once they have the dollar?

This conference would seem to have answered that challenge in the negative. It would say that the farmer of America cannot be sure for his boy and girl, for his wife, of turning the dollar when he has once got it—by the help of the college if you please—

into the facilities for that type of religion which the American wants the American farmer to have and which the American farmer and his wife want.

This group believes that the college of agriculture can be persuaded that to quit the job of the intellectual life at the point of production and of distribution and getting a profit of a new dollar, is to be an intellectual quitter on the whole job which is up to the farmer. At the present time there is more of a problem in turning this dollar into those facilities which would build up the intellectual, spiritual and material life of the farmer than there is in getting the new dollar in production.

I haven't time to elaborate on it but I guess that is our point.

MR. TAYLOR: I wonder if out of this same group in which this idea arose which Dr. Galpin has reported on, if Dwight Sanderson cannot make the statement that he made very concisely and clearly this morning, of a situation where just that task is being accomplished which Dr. Galpin mentioned.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Professor Taylor is the Chairman of this group. We want his help, as we want the Chairman of each group to help, to be sure that the ideas of each group are given us.

MR. SANDERSON: The college extension work can make a contribution to this need of getting the church into the community and hitching up the church with the agricultural work through the type of country life conferences and score cards which the West Virginia extension service has so remarkably developed. I am not going to tell the story that was mentioned. It is in the annual proceedings. But the essential thing is that they hold a week-end series of meetings, Saturday and Sunday, and sometimes starting on Friday, in which the preaching service furnishes the dynamic for the idea of community grouping. They undertake a self-inventory by this score card, and develop a program of community work; then following up the next year by another conference of the same kind.

Now I do not think we have appreciated the importance and the psychological soundness of such a process. With regard to this idea of redirecting the country church, there is a big religious element in these country life conferences. There is preaching by a man whose denomination is not known. It is just the religion of life interpreted in religious terms. That disarms the criticism of even the most conservative theologian. On the other hand these country life conferences furnish something more. You have heard

of Professor James' equivalent for war. Now you come to the psychological equivalent for the revival. You have all of the same elements of zest, of community feeling, of the joy of getting together, and so on, but you follow it up with a practical program. I feel that those who have told us about this have made us appreciate the fundamental soundness of this matter. I think we need to study it and adapt it to these other methods of approach.

Additional Suggestions from Meeting of College Teachers

The following additional suggestions were reported from the discussions in the meeting of college teachers of rural life, county agents and leaders in home economics:

The first part of the discussion sounded a note of pessimism with regard to the attitude of the colleges toward the rural life program. It was said that the philosophy of making the farm pay limits the activity of those interested in developing this program. It resolved into a situation apparently of just how much can we get through the door just pried open? The next note was more encouraging. The following points were brought out as ways and means of getting around the difficulty:

Organizations of influence from the outside that would speak for the program could be called in.

Money for research might be obtained through these outside influential sources.

Personal interviews with faculty members helped. Round table discussions where county agent leaders and deans and others of power could discuss the whole situation.

Extension people finding that the social organization is a leaven working to increase the strength of the country life program.

It may be possible to underwrite the work of a social science department through endowment or private persons until its worth is proved and the college takes it up.

Pressure from the field, it is found, is the biggest converter of faculty opinion.

A greater swell from the country is the best promoter of the work.

Regional conferences with county agents, laymen and preachers help to get the work before this group.

The country church should always be included in this program if it is to work.

The county agent may be induced to work on a broader program if there is no specialist at the State College.

Schools for preachers at the colleges give that group a vision which in the main they do not seem to have at the present time. It is not a question of opposition to the idea but one of lack of vision.

Training of the county agents in their short courses in sociology, economics and education is powerful in creating point of view.

Town organizations may combine with farm organizations in carrying out the rural life program.

The crystallization of sentiment in the group centered about the point that the doctrine of profit for its own sake was temporary and that the doctrine of profit for the sake of higher levels of living might be the turning-point towards social thinking in the minds of leaders now centering their thought and action on the question of farm profits solely and that the community idea was a moral substitute for the revival.

There is danger that the colleges will look entirely to the women and home denomination people to take care of the social program. We should strive to develop a technique of transferring the idea of profits into mental and spiritual goods that will command the respect of college staff and country people.

Rural Pastors and Denominational Competition

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: We are taking the liberty this afternoon of not hearing from each group as a group, but of following through the problems with which various groups dealt and relating them, so that our discussion may go forward a little more systematically and dynamically.

On this matter of looking at the community as a community and getting the spiritual element there, the rural pastors faced up to the question of denominational competition and how they could help on really getting the community to look at itself as a whole. And Mr. Felton is going to report for that group who have some very specific suggestions as to what they are going to do when they get back in their communities.

MR. FELTON: I take it this group gets preached to two or three times each Sunday, and we shall not do that now. I shall just read the nine points. I think some of this was learned here:

1. *Learn to respect the opinions of others,* of other pastors, other people, other denominations.

2. *A regular Pastors' meeting.* Even though there are only two pastors in a community, they should have a regular weekly meeting to talk over their common problems.

3. *A house to house visitation, made jointly by the pastors.* The idea here is not to talk about unity and then go out and quarrel about it, but to say nothing about it and do it, facing the common problems of the community, when the problems are in front of them. I wish you could have been in this pastors' group this morning and caught

the spirit of the men in discussing that. The idea was that that should not be merely a cataloging of Johnnie's age and Jennie's standing in school and whether the man of the house came from the Methodists or the Baptists, but that it was to be a devotional call. One suggestion made here was that when these two ministers are in a Presbyterian home, the Methodist pastor leads in the prayer or conducts the devotional guidance of that household. That is farther than you folks are going, you see.

4. *An occasional exchange of pulpits.* That is to be used on local church people, to show them what a fine pastor they have when they can hear somebody else.

5. *Union services according to the need of the community.* I should not want you to put that down merely as "union services." A great many people have a union service on Sunday, because they lose their Sunday evening congregation and imagine that it is over at the other church and think that if they could get together once they might have a congregation. Also it is not to take a rest on the preaching game. But they recommended a union service simply to promote the feeling of good will of which you have talked. It was suggested that there might be union Sunday evening services regularly during July and August. It was also suggested that special days could be used, like to-day, Armistice Day.

6. *The holding of community meetings.* These might have to do with health or schools or any other phase of community work.

7. *The promotion of community clubs, community councils,* and the like, illustrated by such movements as Boy Scouts. There is no such thing as a Methodist Boy Scout or a Baptist Boy Scout in a small community.

8. *Look forward to a union school of religion.* Now this is specific. I might first say the reason for it is that in the public schools the children have their own age and play groups. To break up that group at Sunday School, for instance, is dismantling their whole idea of group life, and if we are going to teach religion through this group life, we have to solve this.

(*a*) *A daily vacation Bible School may be held jointly.* That does not mean they would all be in one church, but under a certain group or grade they would be in the Episcopal Church, and above that grade, in the Reformed Church; (*b*) *week-day religious instruction,* which also would not be in one church, but would be divided up according to age groups, not denominational groups;

(*c*) *A Sunday Union School of Religion.* These men voted unanimously on that.

9. *Organization of group religious conference associations, diocese comity councils.* That is not the same as the county council.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: About which one of these will you wish to ask a year from now, whether they have carried it out successfully? Are there any of this list that you would particularly like to know whether they succeeded in carrying out for the next two or three years?

A DELEGATE: The joint house to house visitation.

MR. FELTON: If my friend, Mr. Anderson, will tell us what that really does mean I think you will find that it is a great idea.

MR. ANDERSON: I was raised a Methodist in the Methodist class meeting, so I will have to tell it in my own religious experience way. You have heard about Waterman, but I am not responsible for all of the good things of Waterman. Waterman was pretty much of a town when I went there. It is a wonderful community. But when I went there I had the leading church. It was the first town in my ministerial career in which I ever had a church that was called the leading church. I always had one that maybe was equal to another one or a little bit smaller than some other churches in the community. This time I had the best church, prestige, equipment, membership, and everything. Right across the street from my parsonage, the Presbyterian parsonage faced me. The Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church faced each other. There was a little bit of a Presbyterian Church, poor in equipment, not many members, although some of them were good substantial people. Because it was the second church in the community it was always on the defensive. Now I ask you preachers and all others who have had experience, what is the preacher's temptation when it comes to a place like that? Isn't his temptation this, to put his church on the map and keep it on the map, to increase his membership and to increase the prestige and everything like that of that one church? Now that got down into my heart and I felt this, my friends, that that was not promoting the Christian way of living, for me simply to boost my church, simply to be a booster and to boost for Methodism in the community and absolutely to ignore the other church's troubles.

Now there was the first experience, a religious experience with

me, absolutely a religious experience. So out of that religious experience there grew this, a conviction that I ought so to relate myself as a pastor and so to relate my church work with that small church that it could rightly express itself in the community.

So we began to work on that, and the first thing we did in the way of coöperative work was to have a church campaign for both churches. The two preachers, working together, went from house to house in the community and in the village and in the country. He had a Ford. I didn't have any, but I have one now. My people gave me one. And we went in his Ford into every home in that whole High School community. You asked me the other morning how large it was. It is thirteen miles long, and about five miles wide. We went over that community.

The first time we went together we simply visited and invited folks to the "GO-TO-CHURCH" campaign. But we had such good reports about that that we made another visitation together. We took it very slowly. We went into the home and wherever there was a need for prayer, we prayed in that home. The Presbyterian minister called upon the Methodist preacher to lead in prayer in a Presbyterian home, and wherever there was a need for prayer in the Methodist home, the Methodist minister called upon the Presbyterian preacher.

Now, my friends, I will tell you this, that it was a spiritual dynamic in that community. It was not simply felicitations and happy-go-lucky union service; it was a deep religious experience in that community; and they said, "If those two preachers can get together on their knees in our homes, we can get together." And out of that has grown such a community improvement as I have described. Of course, we have the community council and some other things.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Are there any others in this list that you want to ask the committee about? You will agree that one pastor has done this, so that maybe it could be done again. Is there anything else you want to ask about? If there is something here about which you say "That looks nice on the blackboard, but I venture to say that if you ask them two years from now, there will not a thing be done about it," please speak up.

MR. VERMILYA: If we cannot begin at that point, we cannot go very far with the rest of it. I am thoroughly convinced that the

pastor as well as the overhead men we are talking about must assist in helping put over this full program of coöperation.

MR. BURR: I don't know whether this is the time for it. Do I understand the Home Mission Council have had experience in certain states in actually getting the overhead together and working the thing down to the community?

Administrative Changes Necessary

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: We are coming next to the matter of how you get rid of denominational divisions. We are going to hear from the denominational traveling secretaries, who also met and decided what they thought they could do.

MR. BURR: I want to know how that is done.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: We shall get that when we hear from Dr. Dana.

MR. DANA: Our reporter will make this report.

MR. ADAMS: The denomination secretaries faced up to their job and tried to make a job analysis of it. The question was, "What administrative changes must be made to properly minister to rural people?" We suggested several.

First, there should be stronger conviction that the only way out is through interdenominational coöperation. There is no way of providing efficient Christian service except through coöperation in real action, and not on the statement of high ideals.

Means to this end were suggested. There should be an educational effort to go down and up through the church of each denomination and each community to reach officials, ministers and members.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Do I understand that they intend to preach interdenominationalism?

MR. ADAMS: That is the idea. Now we have another idea. There should be organized state interdenominational activity. There should be a fellowship effort between the Protestants, Catholics and Jews, and between Protestant denominations, to understand each other better, no one proselyting and the like.

Second, Christian bodies must redefine their objectives and agree upon them before real coöperation will be possible. They say we shall switch the emphasis from denomination and church to the community, emphasizing service and emphasizing a better understanding of group values to break down prejudice.

Third, more adequate interdenominational coöperation, in meet-

ing specific local needs and also through coöperation and conferences between state interdenominational representatives and denominational administrative officials.

Fourth, the statement was unanimously adopted that it is time to give way in the interest of coöperation, not what nobody wants, but some points which we all want. We must be willing and ready to make sacrifices. There must be means to encourage the allocation of territory and denominational responsibility. The denominational secretaries must have courage enough to tell communities that the churches must find a way to get together.

Fifth. We must develop leaders within the church for the community. There shall be more trust of fellow workers and less "holier-than-thou" attitudes,—prejudices.

Sixth, there must be more unity among denominational secretaries. We must express our convictions toward boards as well as toward constituencies.

Seventh, there should be more lay representatives in administrative councils and activities.

Eighth, there should be wise use of missionary aid. Keep the interest of the Kingdom at the center! We shall decrease aid in the interests of church groupings able to secure and hold suitable personnel, adequate equipment, ample support.

Ninth. More intelligent and wise leadership shall be developed.

Tenth, and in conclusion, the following statement was adopted:

"We believe the emphasis of colleges and universities which pictures success in terms of the city only should be corrected or stopped. We recommend to our rural churches the making of country life more attractive to pastors. We are of the opinion that we need as intensive a missionary spirit for the home field as we have for the foreign field."

A DELEGATE: One suggestion I might make. They say that we are to express our convictions to the Boards. I know one fellow who did that and got fired.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Did this group decide where they could express it?

Home Missions Council and Denominational Divisions

MR. VERMILYA: I am not so sure that you are in as much danger now in expressing yourselves as you might have been in the past. There is developing very rapidly a sentiment in favor of coöpera-

tion. I think there is a feeling on the part of some board secretaries that there is the possibility of being somewhat unfair in that which we express; that there are so many factors in the case that we hardly ought to charge all of the responsibility to any particular group; that we are all sinners. Now I happen to know that there are several of the larger denominations whose secretaries impress upon their representatives the emphasizing of plans whereby cooperation may be carried out. That is true of the Methodists; it is true of the Congregationalists; it is true of the Presbyterians. But there are a lot of things that still must be done before we can be sure this is being carried out.

Now, as regards the Home Mission Council to which reference has been made, this is an old organization, the secretary of which I have just recently become. It has for its object the bringing about of coöperation between the various boards that are associated with it. It is made up of the secretaries of home boards of twenty-eight different denominations, involving about forty-one boards. Some are working with a little more enthusiasm than others. I think that the thing that is of most worth that we are trying to do is expressed in our efforts to unite and coöperate with state superintendents in bringing about what I call a joint field study. There are arrangements with the local administrators that bring down to the field a group of board administrators, and we have them break up into teams and go out over the state studying various sections of the state. We give enough attention to it so that each team shall know personally how the work is being carried on, and shall have some specific cases before them in typical fields. Then after this study has been made, we all come back and sit down together for a day and hear the reports of these teams. They describe what they have seen and they make recommendations concerning the things they think ought to be done in order to get the efficient service which the community needs. And, by the way, we are trying to keep before them constantly the idea that the end we have in view is not the perpetuation of a particular denomination, but the provision of an efficient Christian service for every community within that state.

We are not getting along as rapidly as we should like to, but that is coming to the fore, and we believe that if we get communities thinking in the terms of efficient service, sooner or later we can adjust the problems that are now disturbing us. This plan has

been carried out to a limited extent through organizations in North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Idaho, Western Washington and Northern California, and has worked somewhat successfully in Colorado. Some of these organizations were just recently completed.

I might say for your encouragement that there is in the minds of a great many people, more conscience on that thing than they are able to put into action. There are a good many like the man who had hold of the bear's tail. They can neither hang on nor let go. We are in danger whichever way we go. I believe there is a conscience which has functioned so well as to save the country church thousands, if not millions of dollars in the great western territory. Therefore, I believe that the thing that is needed is reënforcement of this declaration here that we go out into the various situations and stand together in emphasizing the importance of this rational service, and that this can be done in no other way than through coöperation.

Are we going to have a discussion here any further as regards the type of church or the plan that we shall use?

I ought to add this so far as those who go to a field representing the various Boards are concerned. We assume no authority whatever. In all the Councils we sit merely in an advisory capacity, and in these fields where the recommendations are made there is rarely ever any action taken that is not connected up with action down in the local field. So that we do not attempt to throw anything on to the community without the community's having given some consideration to it. I think it is safe to say, however, that in many instances the community as a whole does not participate in the settling of the question as to which of two or three denominations can be taken.

Report from Social Workers, Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. Secretaries

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: I wonder if we could not have at this immediate moment the suggestion from the group of social workers, the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. secretaries, who had recommendations which they want to offer?

MR. DREW: There are two points which were emphasized by this group.

First, we believe in community self-determination regarding the agencies which should work there. Each agency should make available as far as possible information for all other agencies in the com-

munity. The information regarding agencies should be gathered for the community through general meetings, civic gatherings and forums. The conflicts between organizations should not only be met, but be sought out and reconciled. The effort should be to secure thoroughly established local organizations which would meet the needs. However, it was considered that it was impossible to get everyone to agree to every proposal, that being contrary to human nature.

Second, with reference to means of better local coöperation, the council plan is suggested, and the combination between agencies whereby one agency would combine with several others to an end. A very fine illustration was given, where five different agencies combined to put a district health officer in a certain district. The different national agencies should seek to work out plans by which their work could be presented through other agencies of the church, and the school and other social agencies in the field.

Third, a series of creative experiments in coöperation with kindred societies should be carried out, and publicity should be given to these experiments.

The viewpoints back of this effort to make this coöperation possible are trusting each other, and a genuine Christian spirit between organizations and a thorough coöperation of the existing churches and Christian agencies. We must constantly check ourselves up on what will be the result of our action and whether we are dominated by this truly Christian spirit of promotion.

Additional Suggestions

The following additional suggestions were made in the group discussions of the Y. M. C. A., Y. W. C. A. and Social Workers:

How prevent local competition between social agencies? (1) By honesty between those responsible in promotion; (2) through a community council of social agencies; (3) by combinations of two or more agencies in service; (4) by the Christian spirit and attitude between agencies. What difference will the Christian spirit make? We will consider that we are interested in our organization when we are interested in the community. We must know workers in other fields and trust them. "Trust is the beginning of group action." In one case when the different agencies came together they found that there was no overlapping at all but that there was a large field not covered by any agency. It was suggested that agencies make their approach through other groups than their own, such as Exchange, Kiwanis, Rotary Clubs. It was especially urged that national organizations more largely work out their local plans through other agencies and organizations.

How the church and pastor may coöperate with these agencies. The church laymen should be given responsibility for the purpose of their self-development rather than depend too largely upon the pastor's help in social work. The pastor and social worker should see the problem together, make surveys together and develop programs together. According to the survey of Dr. Douglass of the Institute of Social and Religious Research, over one half the pastors are favorable to social work. The social work attitude might well be cultivated among pastors. Social work might well be explained at the county meetings and at summer schools for pastors, some practical methods of agencies working together, a demonstration of combined service such as between the Farm Demonstrator and the Y. M. and Y. W. worker, Home Demonstration Worker and Case Worker. The national agencies should seek out opportunities of experimenting in different forms of unity. One incident was quoted showing the Red Cross State Extension Department, Health Department of the State and other agencies to be working together to the support of public nursing. A greater publicity should be given to these demonstrations of united work and that further practical demonstrations between social agencies and church progress should be undertaken. A genuine responsibility is felt to help the pastor and the local church work out a practical plan of serving its community.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: There have been four viewpoints presented from the groups on community approach. One is joint field survey. The second is a joint approach to a local field, whether it be on survey or is made through a suggested visitation, so that in certain cases one person going out would have in mind the programs and plans of the others. Third, the decision by the local community as to the agencies desired. Fourth, actual combination of work in the employment of persons and carrying out of program. There is a person here from Guernsey County who has a direct example of the fourth one.

MISS ALLING: We have more than four people. We have four agencies, the Health Department, the Farm Bureau, the County Schools and the County Council of Churches. They are putting on a joint program. It happens to be a contest. We don't care anything about the contest, but it was to work out in the best way for the future the things sought to be accomplished. Boys' and girls' club work, religion, and education. It is a voluntary matter, in that communities can go into it if they want to. We started it last year and twelve communities went in. That represented sixty per cent of the children in our county. It represented all but one of the communities of any size in our county. At their unanimous vote we are going on with it again this year. Two new communities are already in and a third may go in. It looks as if one of

our others which was in last year, will be out this year, due to lack of leadership.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Has any one suggestions or modifications he wishes to make? There are four points of emphasis, not on what people are planning to do, but on what they are now trying to do.

Possibilities of More Inclusive Organizational Combinations

MR. WILSON (Wisconsin): I wanted to ask the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. groups whether they gave any consideration to the matter of coöperating with the International Sunday School Association or the International Council of Religious Education on such matters as maintaining older boys' and older girls' conferences and things of that type? In some states they are duplicating.

MR. DREW: There are to my knowledge two experiments now being carried on whereby they join, not one above the other, but by a joint council representing the Sunday School and the Y. M. C. A. They employ in one case a man and in the other case a man and a woman for this purpose. I think there may be an opportunity for conflict there. The reason the Sunday School is not specifically mentioned in this is because there was no representative there.

MISS CLARK (New York City): In many parts of the United States the Sunday School took the lead in the work and we gave them all that they wanted from our program.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Professor Burr, does the discussion of the last remarks meet in any way your query raised earlier?

MR. BURR: Yes, but I wanted it brought out.

PROF. EARP: I should like to cite a case of the Y. M. C. A. in Morris County. We did work in sixteen communities under the joint auspices of the High Schools and the Sunday School Association in Morris County, and the County Work Department under the direction of our County Secretary, with the approval of the County Work Committee. It worked well and the expenses were paid by a joint budget of the three groups.

MR. RAPKING: We have had a joint conference of Sunday Schools, Country Life people, teachers, and the Farm Bureau. Some of the sessions were joint meetings. In others the groups met by themselves, but each group reported back what they had done, and the rest of the people pledged the group to help put across that program.

MR. ALVA TAYLOR: I think anyone interested in those combinations of service in local work ought to look up the Federations for social service that are being developed in Florida, and the County Leagues for social service in Iowa. Neither represents a complete solution of the problem, but each is good on some points.

MR. MONTGOMERY: I want to call attention to a state-wide movement in Virginia. We are not simply confining this to a matter of bringing about church coöperation. We have in addition to our community coöperation the county council, which takes in all agencies, including the elected county officials and all the business organizations, clearing through this one council. I simply wanted to indicate that they are behind this proposition. It is a clearing house. A few weeks ago they had their County Sunday School Association. The County Council made a success of it. They brought in the various agencies and caused them to know about it, and they really put it across. They are coöperating in the church as well as in every other organization.

Proposal in Regard to Overchurching

MR. HALL: It is evident that all through this Conference there has been a consciousness on the part of us all, that one of the outstanding problems before rural religion is denominational relationships and denominational coöperation, and I am sure that all of us are greatly indebted to those committees who have submitted this fine outline of proposals to us this afternoon. Now, may I be permitted at this time to read a resolution, which I think expresses the consensus of opinion of the Conference?

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Don't you think you had better take this at the business session? I am afraid if we get started reading resolutions we shall spend our time on it.

MR. BUTTERFIELD: I told Mr. Hall I thought in this connection I ought to call the attention of the Association to this fact, that the Executive Committee shall be the Committee on Resolutions and all Resolutions introduced at meetings of the Association shall first be sent to that Committee for recommendation. I felt, however, that in the matter of a resolution of this type, which is simply an expression of opinion or judgment, as President I would not rule that that needed to go to the Executive Committee, but it is within your power, however, to say whether it should come up at this

time or at a business meeting. It is immaterial as far as the Executive Committee is concerned.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: I wonder if Mr. Hall would be willing to read this as representing the viewpoint of some group, because if we get into voting and into attempts to adopt resolutions, we shall not at all finish our attempt to gather up the sense of the meeting. My experience has been that when we get to working on resolutions we commence trying to doctor them and getting down into minutiæ and details rather than staying on those things on which we agree. This is the time when the various groups are putting themselves on record.

MR. HALL: This was to have a bearing upon this problem of denominationalism.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Might I suggest that this be referred to the business section for actual adoption or rejection? Is that fair? I am not trying to stop anything you wish to do. I just hope that we may pull through in the spirit in which we have been going ahead.

MR. HALL: I will read the resolution.

"Whereas, this Conference has made it indubitable that the religious needs of Rural America are more urgent and far-reaching than was previously suspected by those most competent to form an opinion; and,

Whereas, it has been repeatedly shown that one of the chief causes of this ominous situation is excessive denominational zeal on the part of Protestant Church leaders, many of whom have been too eager to increase the number of churches of their faith without regard to the presence and operation of churches of other faiths, thereby giving to thousands of small communities more churches than are needed, or can be adequately supported; and,

Whereas, this condition has caused church leaders to expend energy and money in meeting this ecclesiastic competition which should be used in promoting the Christian program of service in needy fields; and,

Whereas, this trend of affairs has had the effect of keeping many men and women of ability and influence from participating in the activities of the typical rural church and the added and more serious result of preventing young men of light and leading from entering the Christian ministry; and,

Whereas, there is a growing and all but compelling desire on the

part of thoughtful citizens throughout America that some solution be proposed to change this ill-fated situation and to try to give to every rural community in America a strong community-serving church motivated exclusively by the spirit of Christ:

Be it voted that it is the judgment of this Conference that the time has come for a re-organization and re-valuation of rural church geographical units, agreeing that generally speaking there should be not more than one Protestant Church to every one thousand population, and that immediate but sane and constructive steps be taken to reduce to this proportion the number of churches in obviously over-churched communities, the initial attack to be made in communities where the churches are of one type, and that the money and leadership thereby released be applied to more needy fields; and furthermore, be it the expressed desire of this Conference that more earnest and sacrificial efforts be given by the various denominations to the recruiting, training, and placing of competent young men to serve in rural fields, and be it further desired that there shall be manifested a greater willingness on the part of laymen to pay adequate salaries to competent rural ministers, bearing in mind that it is unchristian as well as unfair to require a man of such ability as is needed for success in the rural ministry to accept a salary insufficient to provide a fair standard of living and for the education of his children."

I move you that this be made the judgment of the Conference.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: With your consent we will refer this to the business session, because we would be in this proposal making recommendations to other people and not telling what we are going to do ourselves. Are you willing to continue the discussion and finish up and hear reports of what we ourselves want to do as recorded in the group meetings? Let us refer this resolution, if you are willing, to the business session. You may wish to adopt it there. I am not discussing that at all but seeking to hold this session to its main business. May we go very rapidly to the next things? Does the community church group have any further suggestions to make to us?

Report from Community Church Leaders

MR. ALVA TAYLOR: The church community group offer the following suggestions: Recognizing that our religion may use many

forms of expression, we believe it must have some special form in order to adequately express itself. The problem of the adequate expression of religious life depends on the church. In the judgment of the community church group the drift of the discussion throughout the past two days leads to the conclusion that in order to secure a church that can function serviceably, insuring adequate equipment and competent leadership with which to make up a constructive program to meet the needs of the whole community, consolidation of churches is inevitable in over-churched communities. The report, therefore, naturally divides itself into two parts.

First. What changes are most necessary? This and Number 2 are adopted favorably from the community program of the Ohio State Council of Churches, in which the denominational leaders sit.

1. Every community with a population of 500 or more should have one competent, full time, well paid, resident pastor. The efforts of both the community and the denominational officials should be directed to our bringing about this desired result as nearly as possible. In communities that have less than 500 population, it is permissible for the pastor to preach at one other point. He should not, however, have more than two points, so that he will be able to conduct one good service in each place on each Sunday. It is understood that this desired result cannot be effected immediately, but it is an end toward which we should continually strive and which should be done at the earliest possible moment.

2. This also from the platform of the Ohio State Council of Churches. In small communities of less than 1,000 population, one well equipped Protestant church, with well equipped, adequate leadership, will be considered sufficient to meet the needs. If additional workers are needed, as is often the case, the pastor should have assistants, specialized for young peoples' work or some other work of specialized activity, which would enable the church to reach different groups in that community, rather than to have more, all of whom are appealing to the same activity. When the population exceeds 1,000, it is open to question whether a second pastor should be installed. Decision should be based upon the demand of the community.

3. Pastors who serve non-denominational churches should be treated without prejudice by their denominational officials. It is found oftentimes that if a man becomes a pastor of an independent or so-called Community Church, it prejudices his standing when he wants to change pastorates.

4. We commend to denominational officials and to others an unprejudiced study of the various kinds of community churches, with a view to discovering their strong points as well as their weaknesses. We know they are well aware of the weaknesses of the community church, but there are strong points there as well.

Second. What steps should be taken to put these recommendations into effect?

1. Councils of churches should be formed in cities, counties and local communities. That is the Ohio program. It is actually being worked out here, and successfully.

2. We commend the efforts of Home Missionary Societies to withdraw support from competitive churches and petition them to pool their resources to support inter-denominationalism in churches rather than competing churches.

3. We desire more adequate and direct publicity for successful coöperative church undertakings.

4. We commend the methods whereby churches in natural community centers reach out into rural districts.

5. We favor the principle of community determination in the matter of determining what church organization shall operate in the local community.

6. We commend the consideration of the following methods of consolidating churches into community churches.

(*a*) A denominational church so broadening its terms of membership as to receive all Christian people, which may be by: All denominations but one withdrawing from the field, or all denominations withdrawing and organizing a church of a different denomination.

(*b*) The formation of a federated church.

(*c*) The formation of a non-denominational community church receiving in its membership all Christians who wish to join.

7. We petition the Institute of Social and Religious Research to make a thorough nation-wide study of the matters included in the foregoing report.

Methodist Group Petition to the Board of Bishops

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: There is just one other item on this problem, with which most of you are acquainted. One group here, the Methodist group, last evening sent a telegram to the Bishops of the Church in session, as follows:

To the Bishops, District Superintendents and other administrative officers of the Methodist Episcopal Church:

We, the undersigned members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in attendance at the American Country Life Association at Columbus, Ohio, have had impressed upon us repeatedly some facts among which the following is typical:

Communities throughout our country feeling that competing denominations are hindering the coöperation necessary for their largest religious development, are eagerly seeking some solution of their problems.

In the light of this fact and in view of the contribution toward what we

believe to be a constructive solution of this problem we appeal to you to give prayerful consideration to the following suggestions:

1. That the bishops, district superintendent, and other administrative officers of our denomination cordially coöperate with the leaders of other denominations in an effort to so organize rural church geographical units that not more than one Protestant church to every one thousand population shall prevail as a standard.

2. That service to the community rather than to the denomination be the basis on which ministers shall be trained, appointed, and promoted.

3. That the Methodist Episcopal Church take the lead in the give-and-take method with other denominations, even to the extent of encouraging the discontinuance of small, struggling, competing Methodist churches in the interest of real Christian service to the communities involved.

4. That zeal for service to the entire community and a sympathetic consideration for those whose background and training are non-Methodist shall characterize the efforts of the Methodist Episcopal Church wherever it alone occupies a rural field.

5. That the conference membership of a Methodist Episcopal minister shall not be jeopardized by appointment as pastor of a federated, or undenominational church where such a church is required for the largest service of the Community. Signed

Oakel F. Hall, Jonathan B. Hawk, Albert Z. Mann, C. M. McConnell, M. A. Dawber, W. F. Royston, Talitha Gerlach, M. Maude Fowler, E. Tetreau, J. Frank Anderson, Ralph A. Felton, Earl A. Roadman, Walter Lee Airheart, Mary E. Samson, W. C. Coleman, W. H. Hertzog, O. L. Jones, W. W. Diehl, Ira W. Cargo, B. F. Lamb, C. J. Hewitt, Edwin L. Earp, C. H. Law, Edna M. Baxter, Marie Marvel, R. W. Putnam, J. H. Singleton, Clinton B. Henry, S. K. Mardis, Wilbur L. Hart, J. E. Milburn, E. C. Paustian, J. B. James, Paul T. Sanders, H. C. Brunskill, John R. Wilkins, A. H. Rapking, B. H. Darrow.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Now, we are going to have in a moment a brief break in our discussion for the business meeting, as we have to move to another room for the last fifteen or twenty minutes of our session. I have had a note passed up to me, that in view of the fellowship of this afternoon, which seems to be quite different in its outlook from some of the discouragement of Sunday, perhaps we should like to sing together a verse of "Blest be the Tie That Binds."

Protest Against Confining Religion to Church Religion

PROF. TAYLOR (North Carolina): Before we put the blinds on, you made this point in the beginning of our Conference, that you wanted things said in this Conference, rather than on the trains after we leave this Conference. I am absolutely sold on the tech-

nique of this Conference. I am sure we are all going away to find much more good done and a greater change in our thinking than we should have found had we had a whole group of set speeches. And I want to say one thing, and I have written it down here so that I may say it just as concisely as I can. I want to preface it by saying that I know the Conference has done great good. But this is the statement which I want to make here rather than to make on the train.

We came to this Conference to discuss religion in rural life. We discussed everything on earth about the agencies of religion in rural life. We said very little about religion and practically nothing about rural life. Even in the field of religious agencies the church leaders are going back to their desks with a broader vision and deeper appreciation and knowledge of rural life and tremendous spiritual forces and responsibilities than when they came. We have accomplished good but we have fallen far short of plumbing the depths or revealing the possibilities of a topic of this kind, namely, religion, all religion, not merely church religion, in rural life, in all rural life, not merely in church life.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: I think we should all agree with Professor Taylor that we are glad that he made the suggestions he has made. I know there are some who have felt we have focused too largely on questions of church life and not the question of the people who are not represented largely, but who are actually working in an attempt to build up community religion from another point of view. Miss Elsinger is here from one of the farm organizations. She feels that she is working on questions of real value to the community.

MISS ELSINGER: There is one thing I want to say. The particular purpose of our organization, a coming together of the raisers of Burley tobacco, can in no way exclude a definitely spiritual motive, which I think is in all coöperative marketing organizations. This, I believe, is true. I do not want at this time to present a brief for coöperation itself. It is rather late in the day. And yet I should like for this group to leave with something of what is very close to my heart. To-day we have over a million farmer members of community marketing organizations. I feel that a tremendous step forward has been made in a spiritual way in this respect, that where we had a few years ago groups of farmers who were competing against one another, using this for necessarily selfish interests, we

have substituted to-day a basis for coming together which has spiritual and social as well as economic significance. I should like to have most of the ministers feel somewhat as the minister did in one community in which we were working upon a tobacco local. There was this to go on. First of all, was the fact that there had never been in that community any places for coming together upon anything. Then there had come the tobacco marketing organization, and after that there had developed interest, not a local interest in that particular community, but a discussion of the things which could be accomplished. In our talking over the fact that we had substituted a spirit of helpfulness and working together for what had formerly been a spirit of competition, one minister arose and said this. "For thirty-five years I have been trying in our community to bring these people together upon some basis, and," he said, "I failed. We have four churches and we have four distinctly different ways." "Now," he said, "it doesn't really matter whether the motive is the production of tobacco, or whatever it may be; the thing that is important is that we have to-day something in common, that instead of a little community of competing farmers, we have to-day a community whose interests are identical." And he said, "I am working in our local organization, not only because it means prosperity for the people in our county, who are engaged chiefly in raising of tobacco—that is important—but because there is a very definite spiritual significance in what we are trying to do, in that we are coming together on a basis of coöperation instead of a basis of competition."

Now the help of that particular minister has meant a great deal. And I should like to convey to you, if not just that one thing—I had not planned to do it and I do not know how thoroughly I could make you feel something that I feel very strongly—that the movement of coöperative marketing is to-day one of the greatest spiritual forces in our rural territory, and that every one who feels strongly the need for educating himself upon whatever is of spiritual value can well take a part in promoting a coöperative interest, not only on the commercial side—and I might say, if there were no other items, that I consider that necessary, a fundamental thing—but on the spiritual and social sides. I believe we who are working on a program of social improvement, whether it be in the church, in some social organization, or in a coöperative movement, have something in common, and we can work together in promoting a spirit of co-

operation, a spirit of helpfulness, a spirit of neighborliness, a spirit of good will.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: I wish we might have heard from Miss Elsinger at the time Dr. Galpin spoke. We saw there an attempt by the Agricultural College to put into a better agriculture a spiritual value. Miss Elsinger is attempting from a coöperative standpoint to put into operation just that sort of thing.

Now I still think we could sing, "Blest be the Tie that Binds."

The Church's Interest in the Enlarged Emphasis on Religion

MR. VERMILYA: I am not quite in a frame of mind to sing, "Blest be the Tie that Binds." I think we would sing it somewhat in ignorance of the conditions that obtain in each other's souls. I feel, with all due respect to the attitude of Dr. Taylor, that he misunderstands a great many of us who, he thinks, misunderstand him. I verily believe that if I sense the spirit of many of the men with whom I have been conversing here that we understand something of the thing that he is interested in and which has been described by the woman on the other side of the room (referring to Miss Elsinger). Much of our difficulty lies in the fact that we are thinking of an individual preacher somewhere, rather than the particular ones possibly that may be involved in some of these movements We men ought to have been able to make ourselves clear. Some of us, who are ministers and who are church executives, feel that that for which he is clamoring has a right to be respected. And, for one, I do not want the impression left that I am not in full sympathy with the bringing out of all those activities and the expression of that larger spirit through coöperation and the daily tasks in life as one of the channels through which the religious life shall express itself. I have heard men here who have been gathered together in committees saying that same thing. I feel someway or another that we misunderstand each other and I suspect the attitude of approval is probably not as it ought to be. But I believe we are with Dr. Taylor and I want to think that he is with us, and we can sing, "Blest be the Tie that Binds," if we will be a little more liberal in our attitude towards each other. I think all of us here are interested in this full program wholeheartedly.

MR. RAPKING: I think one statement has helped me. We are all inclined to make the mistake of placing the church in the center. I see the church as one of the agencies. If there is any center, it

is the one indicated over there on the chart, viz., God, and when you take that as the center, you can take every other agency for the good of mankind. With no disrespect to the church, it is one of the agencies. It is the agency through which our ideals are created and fostered. But we have the wrong statement when we take the church as the center. Take that other center. It has been tried over and over again. With the right explanation and philosophy we can get away from a lot of this other thing. The county agent is a missionary. The best missionaries in the State of West Virginia are the county agents and the home demonstration people. I have made that statement up and down the State. No one has challenged me. Make God the center, the Kingdom of God the center. As long as we have ideals rather than institutions as our objectives and our goal, we shall get somewhere.

MR. TAYLOR: I think Mr. Vermilya's remarks are a just criticism of what I have said. I probably said it with such vehemence that the emphasis belied the thing that I was trying to say. What I was saying was this. We have accomplished great good. I am absolutely with the church people. But I just wanted to hang this sign out before those of us, who are interested in this problem, that with all the good we have done, there is a great goal beyond us, which we have not completely gotten hold of, and there are depths of this thing we have not completely explored. I think after we have done all the good we have and reached all of the fine conclusions we have, we ought to say that there are tremendous depths in spiritual life that we have not yet plumbed. Church people, agricultural college people, everybody else, let's not have the feeling or let anybody who reads our report have the feeling that we have solved the problem, even the church problem. I want that sign hung out as a vision to lead us on.

MR. VERMILYA: I am agreed and am now ready to sing.

The Convention then sang, "Blest be the Tie that Binds."

The Convention at this point moved to Parlor B where the session was continued.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: There were three or four items that I think we can have in rapid fire fashion; items that had to do with the improvement of technique, which was one of the questions you said you wanted a good deal of attention given to. Professor Earp suggested

to us that we should hear from the Seminaries. We can hear now from Mr. Wilkins, who has the Seminary's suggestions.

MR. WILKINS: In addition to our report which was drawn up by the standing committee, we had these few things brought out in our Seminary group this morning.

PROF. EARP: May we first have the report of the findings for yesterday afternoon's sessions? These reports Mr. Wilkins has are supplementary to them.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: You may proceed.

PROF. EARP: I will just present the conclusions at which we arrived yesterday, preliminary to Mr. Wilkins submitting his report.

Tentative Report of Section on Theological Seminaries

A. The Situation

1. The Theological Seminaries are becoming sensitive to the public demand that young men graduating from these schools shall function in the community, not only as denominational agents, but also as Christian statesmen.

2. A large number of the leading Theological Schools have already placed more or less emphasis upon the social methods of the minister, and his relation to the community, and an increasing number of the denominational schools have put into the curriculum a separate department of rural work, and are training men specifically for the rural field. Such courses as: Rural Sociology; Rural Economics; The Community Survey; Charting and Programizing; Rural Organizations and Agencies; the History of the Agrarian movement; Essentials in Agriculture; Rural Social Engineering, etc., are being given.

Actual field work under the supervision of the Rural work department is being done by theological students serving parishes.

3. An increasing number of Seminary men are choosing the Rural Fields for life investment, and are building up social center parishes throughout the country.

4. Many of the professors engaged in giving such courses in the Theological Seminary are doing actual extension work in the rural communities, and are organizing Rural Life Institutes and Conferences in coöperation with other rural agencies, such as the Extension Service of the Agricultural Colleges. The Rural Life Departments for the Theological Seminaries in coöperation with the Boards of Home Missions are holding Summer Schools in the Seminaries or other educational centers where large numbers of Rural Ministers now on the field are given intensive training for a period of three weeks or more. It is reported that under the auspices of one denom-

ination last summer over three thousand rural pastors were reached. Correspondence courses are offered by some schools to rural ministers on the field, but with academic credit.

B. The Recommendations

1. In view of the emphasis now placed upon Religion in Country Life, and the growing demand for better trained men in Country Churches, we urge all Theological Seminaries, who have not already done so, to provide such departments or courses as will adequately prepare the men who are offering themselves for this field.

2. In view of the denominational competition in over-churched communities, we recommend that Theological Seminaries discourage the practice of sending men into these fields, where this competition is kept up only to furnish a means of support to the student, while in the Seminary.

3. In view of the increasing demand for training in this field and in other forms of social service, we recommend the holding of a conference of the Theological Seminaries for the purpose of strengthening the curriculum and regulating supervised field work.

4. We recommend that the State College of Agriculture prepare courses adapted to the needs of the minister in the rural field and that the Theological Seminaries avail themselves of the coöperation of the Extension Service of the State Institutions so willingly offered.

5. We recommend that the Administrative Offices of the Theological schools in seeking recruits for training in Religious Leadership in the Rural Field, from denominational colleges, neglect not the Colleges of Agriculture and the State Universities where so many of the best young men and women of their respective denominations are in training.

6. We also recommend that Theological Seminaries where practicable organize Theological short courses for Ministers and Laymen already at work in rural fields.

It is the sense of this group that these findings and proposals be in some way brought to the attention of the Administrative heads of the Theological Schools.

MR. WILKINS: We need a larger place in our Seminary work for what is called laboratory work, research work, investigating the valuable things in church work, and those which have been failures; in other words, doing away with some of our lecture work and placing it more on the plane of Seminary and laboratory and research work. We feel there is a great need for that type of work, of which we do not get the benefit.

The second thing we need is a gospel of self-reliance, self-help; we need to put into the community the idea that part of their success lies in them. We need to stir up in them the idea that their

success comes from them. They do not need to accept the programs that are given to them. Develop their own leadership.

Lastly, we need a new standard of what success is. It is not large churches, large programs, large membership, denominational promotion. It lies in building character, promoting community spirit, and the building of life in all of its phases. We feel that these emphases in our Theological Seminaries would do a great deal to help us along this line.

Additional Suggestions by Theological Seminary Professors

The following additional suggestions were made in the section of Theological Seminary professors:

It must be recognized in the beginning that the real difficulty in country life lies with the community itself. Overhead agencies, that of seminary boards and other organizations, are partly to blame, but any community can have what it really wants. Theological seminaries must produce men who will bring to the communities a new gospel of self-help, self-respect and the willingness to solve its own problems.

In putting this program and other modifications of existing practice into operation there are certain almost universal difficulties:

1. The theological seminaries have a misplaced emphasis on scholastic obtainment.
2. Especially in small seminaries, funds are inadequate for an extensive religious education program.
3. In most seminaries there is a lack of rural-mindedness.
4. They focus attention upon the city and think in terms of city problems.
5. One of the most fundamental difficulties is the existence of an unconscious false standard of success. A successful minister is supposed to be one who has a large church with members and money increasing. On such standards the rural church will always be inferior.

The following were suggested as some steps which might be taken to bring about changes in the near future:

1. Seminaries should invite in as honored speakers rural pastors who are making a success in the highest sense of the word. They should not come with prestige of denominational secretaryships or because of anything else than their achievement in country life.
2. Much of the hope lies in arousing student thought and activity on the problem. They can remake standards of success and even curricula, if they will.
3. Most seminaries need to increase the amount of research and study being given to the rural field. This should be larger non-statistical research; a study of what happens when different methods are tried under certain circumstances. Successes and failures are of almost equal importance in this kind of scientific study. Upon this kind of field work rests the possibility for a scientist of the rural ministry.

4. There must be on the part of the seminaries a fearless evaluation of promotional programs. In Protestantism this will mean that teachers in theological seminaries who are consulted with regard to denominational programs, surveys, etc., must insist on an utterly different approach and method.
5. There is need for a change in teaching methods if the things learned in seminary life are to be useful in the rural ministry. There must be less lecture and a great deal more of seminar and discussion group teaching. This might well be tied up with supervised field work under the leadership of competent rural pastors.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: I think you have been interested, as I have been, in the Agricultural Colleges and their report the first part of the afternoon, dealing with how they could put a certain dynamic into agricultural training; and now we have the Theological Seminaries at the close of the afternoon session, indicating how they are going to make ministers more effective.

The Religious Education group had some specific suggestions on the matter of coöperation in religious education. May they be read?

Report from Religious Education Group

MISS MOON: We found that we had to stop and define religious education. We found it necessary to come to unity on the matter of definition of religious education, and I believe I should like to put this before you. The aim of religious education is defined as helping persons so that in all relationships of life they might discover and lead the Christian life, the result being Christian life and character. With that in view we went on to say where the emphasis should be placed in the rural community.

1. *Relation of Religious Education to the Home.* The desire was felt that the isolated home, the mother in the isolated home, should not be forgotten.

We re-emphasized that which was mentioned yesterday afternoon, the six unit home groups for the mid-week lessons, and also we have put into this report the correspondence courses of which Father O'Hara spoke Sunday afternoon, feeling that those had a real place and importance.

We suggest that material dealing with typical home situations, rather than instructional material, should be sent to the mothers or these homes for their help.

It was also suggested that material for home worship, based on religious education, should be included, and a bibliography on religious training of the child in the home.

Where possible, it was suggested that mother problem classes should be gathered together to talk over the Christian nurture of the child, or parent classes, so that they might reach out from the Sunday School for coöperation during the week. To meet this, training conferences are needed in which specific attention is paid to an interchange of ideas and coöperation sought between the parents, Sunday School teachers, the students themselves, and the teachers during the week. That is the home nurture part.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: We ought to say for this group, that while Miss Moon has put this in the "should" form, it represented in their discussions what different people were actually doing or were planning to do as religious education in the country.

MISS MOON: 2. *The Sunday School in the Open Country.* The other phase of the topic was the Sunday School in the open country as against the Sunday School in the village.

It was considered that the need is for trained leadership, so that institutes might be carried on for training lay leadership, or that preferably a slower process but probably a more efficacious process in the long run, is that of the method where the trained leader is able to stay right beside the layman for several weeks until the problem has been worked through.

It was thought advisable to provide a trained leadership for the school, who would have a sympathetic attitude toward the rural community. Religious education should therefore be developed in an assigned territory, not too large to be adequately covered.

We recognized that religious education comes through life's activities. Therefore the week-time clubs should be correlated with the Sunday School interests. Now there seems to be such a pulling away of the children from their school activities that we should strengthen the coöperation among the different agencies.

Women in Country Life

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: I think we should like to hear what the group of women who got together earlier in the Conference have to say. They have felt that women's religious experience was not adequately met out in the country. Miss Herring will read that report.

MISS HERRING: One of the factors responsible for the present situation is the lack of method or opportunity for the development and utilization of women's religious experience. In the past women have not always had respect for their own thinking. They need opportunity to participate in religious affairs, and an education to fit them for this participation. The group feel that women have the following functions which need development.

1. Women hold an important place as religious educators in the home. For this they need training.
2. Women need education to understand the relation of community interest to their job as home makers.
3. Women of strong initiative have much to give to religious leadership. They need opportunity to give it.
4. Women need help in becoming articulate in expressing the religious values which come from their unique experience.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: I think you will be interested in what the rural ministers had to say to themselves in regard to preaching.

Recommendations of Rural Ministers on Preaching *

MR. FELTON: I am not sure if these apply to this group at all. We had in mind only the men who were here.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: All right, what did you apply to yourself? The others here listed to you preach.

MR. FELTON: One was, shorten the prayers. Evidently that did not refer to the laymen. The point of that was that there should be more preparation in the matter of prayers, which means they were to be shorter. I think this is significant.

No sermon should be preached that does not move the people to think and act. Now if we cannot do that we may just as well sit down. That was the consensus of opinion as I got it.

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Do I understand, Mr. Felton, that you mean that sermons that do not deal with questions on which people could think and act would be more or less ruled out?

MR. FELTON: This group was willing to rule out half of the sermons. That is the next subject. Have one worship service, or what is ordinarily called the preaching service, per Sunday. Have one church service and one expressional service. That expressional

* For earlier report of the discussions of this group see page 104.

service might be a forum, or it might be the use of dramatics in the teaching of religious education. I should be glad to ask one of our pastors here to tell about that if he will.

Next, promote sociability and reach special groups through a very old method, that is, meals at the church. I shall be glad to speak of that further. But there should be an objective for those meals besides the oyster. There is more explanation than there is down here.

Preach half of the time to the children, and the other half of the time so that the children can understand it. If the meaning of that is not obvious, I will go further. You see these men were examining themselves. There is no advice here. The worst vice we have is advice.

The next is limiting the sermons to thirty minutes. You have already told this group that they preach too much. Some thought that an hour and a half sermon was short, providing a person was saying something worth hearing. But ordinarily this limiting of the sermon to thirty minutes was recommended as wise.

Select subjects related to the every day life of the people. If Professor Taylor could have heard the discussion, I am sure he would have been in the utmost sympathy and unity with that discussion.

One instance was given like this to show what we mean by special evening services. The pastor had an evening service with an average of twenty-six people. Then he began the idea of dramatizing the Books of the Bible. One time he would take the book of Ruth, another time the Book of Job, and so on. He is now using forty-six young people in that dramatizing work, and his attendance has increased to something over a hundred at an average evening service, whereas before he had an average of twenty-six.

The following additional suggestions on preaching were made by the rural pastors in their group session:

The church services are still of great significance in the life of the community. The Kingdom ideals are more easily maintained through an active program on the part of the church. Some have tried the picnic lunch idea in the country and small town with great effect, which makes it possible for the rural people to gather and enjoy the day. It gives the folks a chance to be and keep dressed up for the day which carries with it a certain value. More pointed prayers were suggested, prayers that are prepared, that are clear, that are dignified, that are well worded. The idea of adapting sermons to the minds of the people in the community, and building them up on the experiences of the people, and toward meeting the needs of these people, was highly recommended. The whole program of public worship needs to be more

stressed and prepared for. The use of subjects adapted to and drawn from the life of the country people becomes very important and the giving of a social emphasis to the modern message of the church is very significant. The question of preaching was carefully discussed and very wide participation in the discussion was evidenced. The conclusion is that the sermons or the preaching should be more religious and devotional and less popular and sensational. The whole discussion sums itself up in this line, that sermons should be preached that will move the people to thought and action. If this is to come about the pastor must be natural in his presentation, give natural expression to the high emotions and ideals which the people have.

SUGGESTIONS OF CHAIRMAN ON FOLLOW-UP AND ON THE PROCESS OF THE CONFERENCE

CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Will you permit the Chairman a few moments as we close this session? Would it be fair to say, one to the other, and each one to himself, that we have been meeting together here in fellowship and have a number of specific things that we should like to do, but that we have so many of them that if we are not careful we shall do none of them? Would it not be worth while saying each person to himself, "I will go back over these suggestions before I leave this city, before even I leave this place, and jot down the two or three or four things I am going to commence right away?"

As I have listened to this discussion, practically every item of ways and means suggested this afternoon could be carried out by somebody. Now if each person here carried out three items, if each person here carried out but one, it would make some difference in country life before we come together again. I should like to suggest that you really do put down in black and white in a note book or somewhere things to do immediately as the result of the American Country Life Conference, "Ways and Means that I am going to undertake at home."

Would you permit your Chairman also just one word in regard to the process through which we have gone here? We came here together with many points of view, with varying conceptions of country life, with many vocations. I think we have succeeded in entering into fellowship one with another and in helping one another. I should like to suggest, if you will permit me, that you will not get unity in country life simply by gathering people together, that the process of democracy is a process that requires just as much care as the propaganda of putting over programs. If you want members in the local community to work together, to work out plans,

to get to understand one another, you will have to give in the local community, attention to the technique of democracy. We have tried that in this conference at the suggestion of the program committee. All of the leaders have worked for many hours between sessions and in advance of this Conference, work that most of you know nothing about, and the recorders and the committees have spent many hours in order to save you time as you were working together. If you will give as much attention to the method by which you can get situations and problems out into the open and discussed and by which you get people working together, as you give to putting on some of your big demonstration meetings you will help to bring into the local community that spirit of fellowship which we have tried to secure here. I really think you may be able to take back home something of the spirit of what has gone on here.

I should like to make two or three cautions. You will notice that in this Convention we have been working on the following assumptions: First, we have assumed that we had questions regarding religion in the country, of common concern, situations about which we would like to do something, but concerning which we did not know what to do, or concerning which we honestly disagreed as to what should be done. We came together to help one another find the way out. I think you will agree that there has been considerable change in this group in the willingness to listen and to give and take; that we are much less earnest about our own points of view and much more willing to learn one from the other than we were the first few days together. Shall we not bring into the community life that same spirit, that we come to listen as well as to give, to learn as well as to teach?

I think you will agree that a second essential assumption is that frankness must be secured. Professor Taylor did us a service in speaking frankly this afternoon and not waiting until the Convention was over. Frankness has increasingly characterized this gathering. Usually in a convention the meetings go on very smoothly, but little knots gather outside to protest or organize opposition. We have learned that we can be frank in our disagreements as to issues and still have the finest spirit of brotherhood between individuals. That, we must achieve in the local community.

And I think we have learned, that if you will study together long enough on any issue of concern with a spirit of worship, which is a spirit bigger than any individual interest, there are

few, if any conflicts on which a way out cannot be found. I am hoping that there may be in many country communities gatherings of groups of people who disagree. Usually the people who agree get together and the minority does not count, or if the members of the minority are present, they feel very much reinforced in their own point of view. Let us get the folks who disagree together, because after all the community is made up of very many different points of view, and the more points of view represented the richer will be the outcome. If we can actually build into the community life, as in this Convention we have found it possible to do, the contribution of every earnest group that wants to see a better life in the country, I believe when we get together another year it may mean a new outreach in country life.

REQUEST FOR TESTS

Some of you filled out at the beginning of the Convention a little outline that we worked out to discover some things about the conference. You may have thought we did not look at it at all. We did actually study it. Some shifts were made in the program in the light of what those questionnaires represented as interests of the group. We found that we did not, as no person is ever able to do, sense fully what your problems would be, when we made these out. We covered some things in which you were not interested. We are interested as I think you will be, to know what effect this kind of Convention has. You don't remember what you put down in this outline before. We are interested to know what you will record now so as to see if there was any modification of opinion since you came here. So if there are fifty or a hundred people here who filled out the first outline who would be willing to fill it out again as honestly as they did then, putting their initials, if they do not want us to know who filled it out, and thus giving us their present conviction, I think it will help. We will mail you both copies which you filled out if you wish, and will put your address on the questionnaire.

I think, so far as I know, this closes the discussion and we will turn to the business session.

* For Results of Tests see Appendix, page 208.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

SUGGESTED SOCIAL IDEALS FOR THE RURAL CHURCH

By Dr. Arthur E. Holt, *Chairman*

We believe that Religion is the search of man for God and the coöperative quest for the Society of God on Earth.

We believe that the pattern ideal for a Christian Social Order is that of a body in which each member lives for the welfare of the whole and the whole for the welfare of each member.

We believe that the Church should be the organized fellowship of those who are seeking the Society of God on Earth.

We believe that the central experience of the Christian Church is the spiritual fellowship of men of pure heart gathered without regard to race or caste or class.

We believe that the Church cannot teach what it cannot exemplify. That it must win the moral right to teach by first realizing in that realm in which it has responsibility, those basic Christian principles in which it professes to believe. To teach brotherhood the Church must be a Brotherhood. To teach service it must apply the service principle to its own organization. To give moral leadership to an over-competitive society, it must in the realms in which it has control, replace competitive strife with coöperative effort.

We believe it is the duty of the Church to see in its own community the first responsibility for the society of God on Earth. It should provide for the religious education of every child no matter how isolated. It is the duty of the Church either through its own services or in coöperation with others to provide for the culture of the fourfold life, physical, intellectual, social and spiritual.

We believe that the Rural Church should lead its community in so raising the standards of all phases of its life, that its business, its education and its politics shall be inspired and regulated by the ideals of Jesus.

For the farmer this will mean in the future as in the past:—

Exercising a careful stewardship of the soil.
Practicing intelligent and efficient farming.
Efficiently marketing useful goods.
Preparing himself for intelligent citizenship.
Conscientiously exercising the duties of parenthood.
Contributing his share to the national conscience and culture through the support of those institutions by which he participates in the same.

In a Christian Commonwealth he who exercises duties, must be granted rights, therefore a Christian social order should guarantee to the farmer:—

The right of self-determination in the organization of his community.
A recognized place in the good will and public opinion of the nation.
An opportunity through coöperative activity to win a measure of economic power commensurate with his service.
A system of education which takes account of the cultural needs of the American farmer.
A political order in which the farmer's vote should count for projects vital to his welfare.
A system of religious organization which is adapted to the necessities of rural community life.

With that ardor with which we pray
Our Father Who art in Heaven
Hallowed be Thy name,
We would dedicate ourselves
To so work and teach and preach
That the world in which we seek our daily bread
May be so ordered by the principles of justice and fair dealing,
That every dweller in countryside and city,
In mining camp and factory town,
May see in the community in which he dwells
An object worthy of his whole-hearted devotion,
Because it offers to him a fair share
In those abiding satisfactions of life
Which are the just reward of the fraternity of those who serve.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RURAL ORGANIZATION

WALTER BURR, Chairman

At the request of the secretary of the Association, a study was made during the year, of the status of rural social organization on a county basis. Letters were sent out to all agencies in the United States from whom it was thought information might be received concerning various types of organizations. These included secretaries of State Boards of Health, Directors of Agricultural Extension, Divisional Secretaries of The American Red Cross, National officers of The Boy Scouts, The Camp Fire Girls, The Y. M. C. A., The Y. W. C. A., and kindred organizations.

From the replies received we deduce the following information: There are two distinct forms of county organization for social action. One is the Governmental Tax-Supported Form, and the other the Voluntary Organization Form.

I. THE GOVERNMENTAL TAX-SUPPORTED FORM. The activities of such agencies are uniformly co-extensive with the county area, due to the fact that the county is a convenient unit of government already legally recognized. Any movement for rural people, furthered by state government, naturally gets back to the people and becomes operative on the basis already provided—the county.

1. *The County Board of Public Welfare.* In many states movements are formed for county boards of child welfare, or county boards of public welfare. These are sometimes a mere extension of the area covered by already existing city boards of like nature. In other cases they are purely voluntary boards without paid leadership, and more or less ineffective.

The law directing the establishment of county boards of public welfare in North Carolina, includes among the duties and powers of county superintendents of public welfare, "the promotion of wholesome recreation, study of the causes of distress and other investigations in the interest of social welfare." The law passed in Missouri in 1921 states that the county superintendent of public welfare, aside from performing certain functions having to do with recreation and the like, shall look after cases of poverty, investigate causes of crime, and do the work generally of a professional social worker.

Many states have passed through the period of investigation and study by children's code commissions, and have recommended the es-

tablishment of county boards of public welfare. The Minnesota Child-Welfare Commission was responsible for the act providing for county child welfare boards in that state. The Nebraska Commission and the Kansas Commission each recommended an act providing for a county board with an employed superintendent, but in neither case did the proposed measure become a law.

New York and Virginia have also extended the scope of existing laws or enacted new laws providing for various phases of public welfare work on a county basis.

The cases cited are typical of a movement that has a great bearing on this field of rural organization, especially in those states that have few cities of great size.

2. *The County Health Unit.* The county health unit, appearing in many parts of the nation, consists of a county hospital and clinic, a full-salaried, full-time physician, and a public health nurse or a corps of such nurses. This is a tax-supported agency, on a county basis. Public health authorities agree that this is the objective toward which we should work, approaching it from whatever vantage ground we may have in a given county. In the rural sections of some counties the plan is meeting with unexpected favor, due to the disappearance of the country doctor.

County organization for the types of public welfare work here referred to, is not without its usual difficulties, such as the fact that the county is not always a natural social unit; the tendency for such work to become a political football and the like. But evidently we have started upon a program of tax-supported public welfare activities of great significance to farm people. In the first case, there is provision for a uniting of various offices which in many states have formerly been fee offices, poorly administered. The county welfare superintendent thus takes the place in a rural county of the truancy officer, probation officer, poor commissioner (aside from performing added functions)—the service costing the county little more than the aggregate amount formerly wasted on inefficient service. The County Health Unit means an increase in the tax levy, but should pay for itself many times over in the savings to the individual taxpayers through maintaining the health of themselves and their families. Rural organization workers would doubtless do well to study carefully these measures proposed for the public welfare agencies on a county basis, and explain them to the farmers who

in the vast majority of our counties bear much of the tax burden and have the balance of voting power if not an actual majority.

3. *The Farm Bureau as a Social Agency.* All state directors of extension were asked their opinions with regard to the place of the Farm Bureau in County Social Organization. The majority believed that the social function of the farm bureau is an important one. Some admitted that it should be, but confessed they had not given much attention to this phase of the work, and asked for information as to how they might direct their work more along social lines. One stated that while he believed strongly in the social function of the farm bureau, he found that the county agent who goes out avowedly to carry a social and recreational program is likely to fail, while the one who says little or nothing about it but really adds many features of such a program to his work, succeeds.

Names were received of some forty county agents and home demonstration agents who were especially successful in the social program. Letters were written to all these, and replies received giving full and most interesting reports of methods and projects.

The Boys' and Girls' club work is proving another avenue through which the County Farm Bureau is carrying on social and recreational activities in many counties.

The Chairman of the committee, in receiving these many reports, was impressed with the fact that very much of the work which is being advocated for rural people, is already being done by the county workers paid from coöperative federal, state and county fund. It is hoped later to give a more complete report of the work of the farm bureau as a social agency.

II. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES: There should be mentioned here those great agricultural organizations such as Grange, Farmers' Union, etc. Aside from these there are a number of social service agencies in the field approaching the work from the same organization angle.

A considerable change in this regard may be noted in very recent years. This seems to be due to the fact that a voluntary agency works out from a common center, serving natural social groups, and expanding to areas where the work is opportune and welcomed.

It is significant for example that the Y. M. C. A. has changed the name of the rural department from that of "County Work" department to that of "Town and County Department" showing a tendency to get away from actual county lines. The Y. W. C. A., likewise,

has a "Rural Communities" department, on a district or area basis rather than on a county basis. The American Red Cross Secretary writes of certain of their chapters as "rural county chapters."

A communication from the National office of the Boy Scouts of America announces their system as a district or area system, a district comprising two or more counties, or areas that can be readily grouped, without regard to county lines. Here again, they say, experience has taught them that the county is not a natural social unit, and that voluntary rural organization work progresses best by finding the natural rural social unit for a given activity, and utilizing it.

The Parent-Teachers association announces organization on a county basis, but in many cases this amounts entirely to notifying the county superintendent of schools that he or she is appointed county chairman and asked to proceed with the work.

Certain states have laws providing for library work on a county basis. Detailed information may be obtained from the American Library Association. Many interesting cases were found where city libraries are extending their service to farm people, and the county agent or the home demonstration agent or boys' and girls' club worker actually taking the books out to the people.

In Virginia a most interesting movement is found in The Coöperative Education Association. The nineteenth annual report of this organization was issued in 1923. This organization has perfected community leagues county by county. Every phase of voluntary public welfare work for rural people is reported by this state association. The work is announced as "under the direction of The Governor of Virginia, The State Departments, Higher Institutions of Learning and a Group of Citizens." The rural worker who may desire to have a complete list of all the things that rural communities might possibly do for their own betterment, will find it in the achievements reported by these leagues in Virginia.

The Girl Scouts and the Camp Fire Girls both attempt to work in rural communities, but on the local and district basis. In a few Jewish rural areas, The National Council of Jewish Women conduct recreational and social service generally through a department which they call the department of Farm and Rural Life.

This does not purport to be a thoroughly exhaustive list of rural organization on a county basis or changing from a county basis to a local or district basis. The cases described are however typical.

CONCLUSIONS: In recent years, a great many organizations formerly confined for the most part to the cities, have sought to extend their activities to the rural population.

Official tax-supported organizations have usually proceeded on the county basis as the natural legal unit.

Other organizations have ordinarily begun operations on the county basis, but changed to a social unit basis decided by the nature of the program proposed, the personnel and facilities for carrying out the program, and the opportunity offered for extending it.

Recommendation: Rural workers may well begin to study toward the acceptance of an ideal 100% organized condition of a county or rural area, with the purpose of seeking to encourage and maintain that minimum of organization that will render the maximum rural service.

TENTATIVE OUTLINE OF "AN ADEQUATE SYSTEM OF RURAL EDUCATION FOR THE UNITED STATES"

Under Consideration by the Committee on Rural Education
ERNEST K. BURNHAM, *Chairman*

PART I. WHAT ARE THE NEEDS?

A. PUBLIC SCHOOLS, COLLEGES, AND UNIVERSITIES.

I. Universally available up-to-date elementary schools of kindergarten (where possible), and six, seven, and eight grades.

II. Junior high school where six or seven grade elementary school is established.

III. Senior high school of three years where there are six-grade elementary schools and junior high schools; four or five-year high schools where there are seven or eight grades in the elementary schools.

IV. Junior and senior college advantages open to all citizens of the state who qualify for entrance, at minimum possible expense for fees and tuition.

V. College and university graduate, professional and vocational opportunities open to all alike at bearable expense on the basis of adequate preparation and capacity to do such work.

Notes: Humane public provision for physically unfit and mentally handicapped children, is an obvious need. Where not locally possible, the child should be taken to it.

Whenever possible, standard high schools should be made available in the unit of public school organization where the pupil lives, with publicly paid transportation, when necessary. When this is impossible, tuition and transportation charges should be paid to the nearest standard high school by the district, where the district is the county, and the state in equitable shares; where the district is less than a county, the state should pay all transportation.

VI. Stated in terms of objectives, the foregoing analysis would read: An adequate system providing (a) education for health; (b) education for citizenship; (c) education for life occupation; (d) education for leisure; (e) education for personal and social dynamic attitudes and activities.

VII. To achieve these objectives, a curriculum is needed which is developed in the light of modern educational and social philosophy, and utilizing all the contributions of modern psychological experimentation and research. No place for mere traditional inclusion or otherwise unsoundly based modifications. The rural school curriculum needs organization anew, not through patching up or adapting other curriculums, but starting with the raw materials of all curriculums, the nature and needs of the individual and of society, and the educational resources in the social heritage and in the activities and contacts available in the situation for which the curriculum is to be made.

B. EXTENSION AND AMERICANIZATION TEACHING.

I. Vocational and business guidance and instruction for men and boys by county agricultural agents in every agricultural county in the United States.

II. Home and home-group guidance and instruction for women and girls by county home demonstration agents in every county.

III. Vocational, home, and social guidance and instruction by qualified county leaders to be in close correlation with all other agencies (e. g., home, school, church, etc.) which are active in nourishing the total of human life possible to children, youth, and adults.

Note: Where counties are too small or too large to afford the most economical administrative and working unit for the foregoing extension and Americanization teaching, interchange of work

between and within counties should be set up to equalize and standardize the service in extent and in quality.

C. GENERAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE

I. The educational value of fellowship and coöperation in mutually voluntary social groups for recreational, financial, political, fraternal, and religious purposes should be made clear by every possible means.

II. The necessity of having communities of such size, property and population that a whole round of experiences in natural, personal, and group participations, as well as in schools, may be made available for educational purposes would be emphasized as the only means by which individuals become liberally educated.

Note: In rural areas which are certain to be too sparsely settled to afford community living, settled population as a rule tends toward the irreducible minimum or total migration. Education would hasten this tendency except for the hardy souls who crave isolation, adventure, and possible participation in the discovery of hidden resources.

PART II: SUGGESTIONS FOR MORE FULLY MEETING THE NEEDS

A. LOCAL AND STATE EXECUTIVES AND INSTITUTIONS

I. State systems for meeting the educational needs of the rural population, though they are already well advanced in some states, are falling short to some extent in all states and are appallingly inefficient still in many states.

II. Further progress toward the equalization of public school service in availability, amount, and efficiency, should find a scientific basis in thoroughgoing researches of the itemized facts about actual situations as they now exist. The specific readjustments needed to correct obvious inequalities should be most expeditiously and economically made.

III. The provision of professional and permanent as opposed to political and changing administration and supervision of rural schools is necessary. This might be accomplished through the state unit and local administrative and supervisory units adequate in size as to taxable property and number of children to establish, equip, and maintain school systems satisfying modern

ideals and consistent with the objectives indicated. This provision should be accomplished through state and county organizations in charge of non-partisan lay boards with professional educators and efficient business men as executive officers.

IV. State Departments of Education through divisions of rural education should provide executive and advisory field workers for the general improvement, and the necessary state assistance in local and general campaigns of publicity should also be available and be put to use.

V. State institutions of higher learning should afford research men and facilities to acquire the facts about existing conditions in any area which applies for such help, and searching study of the materials of education should be kept up.

Note: The Federal Bureau of Education has excellent research facilities available for wide use.

VI. Fundamental to any adequate educational system is an adequate elementary school. Besides a thoroughgoing reorganization of the elementary curriculum, it is essential that qualified teachers be provided, which necessitates a teacher-training program far in advance of what we now have and, concomitantly, a revision of certification provisions and salary scales. Provision for adequate supervision of rural schools of every type is also essential, both in the immediate present of ill-equipped teachers and in the desired future when rural teachers shall be qualified for their work. The isolation never completely separable from rural situations calls especially for such an agent of integration and stimulus of the individual by the larger group.

VII. The problem of the institution wherein elementary education is to be afforded needs frankly to be faced. Limitations of consolidation, if they exist, need to be recognized and with them the necessity of retaining a number of one and two-teacher schools. To meet the contingencies of the latter situation, especial provision needs to be devised in curriculum organization, equipment, teacher qualification, etc. The facts imposed by distance and topography must be taken into account.

VIII. Similarly, for high school provision, the question needs to be considered whether the large high school can ever be hoped for as a general fact, and organization of high school provision needs to be devised in the light of conditions as they are likely to

be, not as it would be administratively untroublesome for them to be.

B. VOCATIONAL AND GENERAL EXTENSION

I. Vocational and home extension work supplementing and applying the work of the schools and life's experiences has already an elaborated scheme depending upon federal, state, and local coöperation for its introduction, support and success. This scheme is on altogether too narrow a basis. Liberalizing influences should receive more attention.

II. Upon broader foundations, applying the corrective suggestions of experience, there should be made available to every rural community in the United States in the earliest possible future, every part of this instruction and guidance which time has proven to be worth while.

III. Americanization instruction and guidance should come to distributed foreigners upon the land through the extension service, and in congregated foreign farm populations, the extension service may well be deliberately planned and manned to meet the wide variety of needs in such cases. This statement is not intended in any way to be prejudicial to the growing Americanization work by local and state public school and extension instruction of pupils and adults.

C. CONSERVING CONSCIOUS UNITY.

I. This committee has no intention of depreciating in any way the highly specialized leadership which is the present vogue, especially in the cities. In a very great measure the progress of human welfare is the result of such guidance.

II. There are many fields of advancement in rural education and life where this penetrating guidance is likely always to be at a premium. But the greatest educational service of rural life to its youth and adults consists in its transparency of organization whereby the larger unity of all life's welfare becomes obvious.

III. The most precious educational service in the United States is that which keeps the greatest possible proportion of the citizens aware of their mutual interests, dependences, and joys. To this end, all general education services which are incident to a widely distributed participation by citizens of all ages and conditions in personal and group recreational, financial,

political, fraternal and religious experiences should be zealously fostered.

NOTE: A member of this committee differing definitely with the statement that "The greatest educational service of rural life to its youth and adults consists in its transparency of organization whereby the larger unity of all life's welfare becomes obvious," says "The transparency of organization for rural school administration is, in my opinion, the greatest weakness rather than the greatest strength of rural life."

TRANSMITTAL STATEMENT

This outline is the result of correspondence since it has not been possible for the committee to meet. The chairman has tried to include every constructive suggestion contributed by the committee membership, but the result is in no true sense a complete consensus.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RURAL SOCIAL INVESTIGATION.

CARL C. TAYLOR, *Chairman*

I

There are three chief reasons why it is much more difficult to investigate religion than it is to investigate the church. First, in the case of religion it is difficult to tell when you have the specimen under the microscope. What is religion? Who is religious? Second, whatever religion is, it is in cause, effect and essence a part of the culture of life of the community and civilization. It is so interwoven in attitudes and practices of the individual that it can not be separated from the other aspects of his personality or character. The exact methods of scientific research demand isolation and religion neither socially nor individually can be isolated. And, third, even if we could isolate the phenomenon and were sure of our specimen when we had it, it objects to being placed under the microscope.

Efficient research is always conditioned by two chief things: one, knowing what it is most important to discover; and, two, knowing how to go about discovering it. All science, even most exact sciences, are limited by their techniques and technologies, far more than they are by their phenomena. Your committee on investigation, therefore, had a difficult task, indeed, in attempting to make a

contribution on the topic of "Discovering Worthwhile Facts About Religion in Rural Life."

We shall attempt to do two things. First, to discover the things which we believe to be worth while to know on the subject, and second, name those which we believe can be discovered with methods sufficiently exact as to make the findings trustworthy.

Remember, that the topic of this conference is Religion in Rural Life and not the Rural Church. Keep in mind, also, that we are attempting to set the gauge for the discovery of unknown or imperfectly known facts, not to rehash or summarize the results of investigations already made. Some of the things we shall list have come out as sidelights of the findings of investigations of other phases of rural life. Some even have been struck at directly but have not been adequately studied.

In an attempt to discover whether the task before the committee was one capable of being performed we wrote to a number of students of the rural church and religion asking them to answer five questions in which answers we hoped to discover whether they thought religion was a sufficiently isolated phenomenon to be capable of objective study and whether there are any known methods by which it can be studied. The criteria we had in mind by which to arrive at conclusions from their answers were: First, that scientific investigation can be accomplished only if some degree of isolation of phenomena is possible; and, second, that the comparative technique is the essence of all fruitful methods.

Our first question was, "What distinctive contribution should religion make to rural life?" The answers without unwarranted modification can be classified as follows: (1) to spiritualize or idealize rural life; (2) to motivate or stimulate social action and organization; and (3) to set goals for individual and social achievement.

Our second question was "What do you consider to be the church's distinctive or specific division of labor among the institutions and agencies operating in rural communities?" The answer to this question can be classified as follows: (1) to promote religion as defined above; (2) a stimulating force for other agencies and activities.

Our third question was, "Are there any means of investigating religion in rural life as distinct from the rural church?" To this question, a few answered no. Those who answered yes named two methods of approach: (1) case study of individual attitude

and practice and (2) investigation of other institutions, agencies and social activities of the community.

Our fourth question was, "What distinctive characteristics are there in rural life which result in religious phenomenon different from religious phenomenon of city life?" The answers to this question were unanimously yes. The characteristics not of religion but of rural city life named were: (1) isolation, (2) absence of social organization and agencies, and (3) different occupations.

Our fifth question was, "What is the most important practical and vital information we need to have concerning religion in rural life?" The answers can be classified as follows: (1) the effect of types of religious organizations, (2) the efficiency of the rural church as an institution, (3) what type of religious beliefs stimulate recognized worthwhile individual conduct, (4) the effect of the religion on individual conduct, and (5) the effect of the religious or church program on other social activities.

II

Accepting, now, the opinion of the persons who answered our questions and not hesitating to add what is in our own minds let us array these contributions in the form of a list of questions, answers to which would give us practical and vital information on the subject in hand.

1. What practicable ideals of life do rural people hold and practice? That is, could we not discover by analyzing the behavior of individuals what the dominant motives of their lives are which lead to certain types of behavior?

2. From what source or sources did they gather or assimilate their ideals? That is, once having discovered the motives for their conduct could we not by case study trace these motives and ideals to the source or sources of their origin?

3. What are the social effects of beliefs which are definitely and constantly propagated by religious agencies? That is, could we not analyze out of specific church programs and teachings the dominant themes or theses which are being constantly propagated and then by comparing the dominant motives of individual conduct, judge the effect of the religious teachings on conduct?

4. Against what social activities and agencies are organized religious bodies openly arrayed? Would it not be comparatively

easy in studying the history of specific communities to discover what social activities and tendencies the Church has opposed?

5. What social activities and organizations now operating in rural life were directly started, dominantly assisted or supported by organized religious life? That is, would not an objective study of the evolution of specific communities give us honest judgment upon the influence of the Church in promoting worthwhile social activities.

6. What new things which have started in rural communities and have now demonstrated their value in rural life did the Church or other religious bodies start? This would contribute to the same analysis as number 5 and would probably discover the fact that there are other agencies and movements in rural life which are furthering the spiritual expression and growth of the community than those taught and practiced by the Church.

7. What classes of people in the rural communities are not being reached by any or all of the religious agencies? This could be accomplished by an actual individual canvass of individuals within specific communities.

8. How effective or efficient are the methods or techniques by which religious agencies are putting across the religious ideas, ideals and attainments? That is, could we not apply similar tests on actual behavior to those being applied in job analysis in industry?

9. What are the social and spiritual needs of rural life? That is, could we not at least discover by actual survey the stultifying elements in rural environment and rural occupations and from them get a pretty definite cue as to where the enlivening influence of religion could best be applied?

10. What difficulties do the same or similar worthwhile religious activities encounter in rural life which they do not encounter in city life? After having made a thoroughgoing analysis of rural life, a comparative study with city life would help us to estimate values and be sure that we were dealing with forces which are fundamental to all life.

In addition to the attempt to study the facts of religion in rural life which have not thus far been studied in our church surveys there are suggested by the church surveys already made some follow-up studies which would give us valuable information. For instance, it has been discovered in our rural church surveys that the churches are failing to attract and hold the young people. It is important that we discover why and what the effects are in the

lives of the young people who are not participating in organized church life. What are the effects in the lives and conduct of the young people who are no longer attached to the church. The church surveys have set up a standard of measurement called the Par Standard for rural churches. Why not make some of the studies suggested above on the basis of the comparison of par-standard churches and others?

III

When we come to suggesting methods of investigating the phenomena which we have listed above we are again confronted with a difficult task. Needless to say any investigation whose findings are to be accepted as trustworthy will have to be statistical to a degree. The type of statistical technology that could be applied to such studies would be:

1. Counting and classifying. That is, members and specific types of organizations and activities could be listed. The rise, fall and development of activities and organizations could be accumulated. The actual behavior practices of individuals could be studied. Attitudes and beliefs of individuals could be listed.

2. Valuable information could be obtained by correlation studies, as for instance, correlation between the rise, fall and development between religious institutions, other institutions and agencies in specific rural communities. Correlation between such items in the lives of individuals and their standards of living as were suggested in II, and the growth and development of religious agencies and institutions in specific rural communities. Correlations or comparisons between the operation of specific tendencies and movements in city life and rural life. Correlations between religious and economic facts in specific rural communities. Correlations between the economic and social activities of farmers' coöperatives and the growth, development or decline of religious agencies in specific rural communities.

In addition to such studies as those suggested in the paragraph immediately above could be added the techniques and technologies of all kinds of psychological tests and measurements as applied to the physiological, social and moral behavior of individuals and groups.

Further valuable studies could be made by deductive methods

from a study of facts discovered in rural investigations quite outside the field of social phenomena and a great contribution could be made if the numerous economic surveys now being made in rural life could have attached to them studies which would discover the type of facts referred to here.

Your Committee believes that such studies as we have suggested above would be not only fruitful but possible.

RELIGIOUS TRAINING IN THE HOME*

ILENA M. BAILEY, *Chairman*

In order to discuss religious training in the home, the committee found it necessary to make a few statements explaining its interpretation of "religious training."

The term "Christian religion" admits of a variety of interpretations. Religious conviction, however, expresses itself in the form of personal and social conduct. Christianity, therefore, may be defined as a mode of life. It involves habits of conduct, attitudes and knowledge with reference to Christianity and the social order.

Modern psychology and methods of education clearly indicate that formal instruction, one of the means to this end, is, alone, inadequate to realize these traits of Christian character. They must be developed in the child daily by the sum total of its environmental influences.

Among these environmental influences, statistics indicate that the home constitutes either the greatest asset or the greatest liability in the life of the child. Reasons for this are: (1) The length of the period of home influence; (2) The relatively large proportion of time which the child spends in the home; (3) The high degree of suggestibility, plasticity and retentivity of the child, especially during the earlier years.

* The theme, Religion in Country Life, made the conference at Columbus an opportune time to discuss child training in the home. About thirty persons attended this round table. A committee was appointed to organize the recorder's notes into a brief report embracing the opinions expressed by those present. This was to have been presented at a second round table, but as no time for a meeting was available without conflicting with the general program, the report is now presented by the committee on home-making. A selected bibliography has been added. The committee was assisted by Prof. and Mrs. C. E. Lively, Columbus, O.; Miss Anna Clark, Nat'l Board Y. W. C. A., New York City; Mrs. Charles Schuttler, Farmington, Mo.; Miss Elizabeth Alling, Norwalk, O.

These considerations carry particular significance for the farm home where the relative separation of families and the nature of the occupation prolong the period of family influence and intensify its effectiveness.

Problematical Situations

Many of the following situations are common to both rural and urban homes, but in this report only the rural home is considered. Although the rural home is probably functioning more effectively than the city home, it is believed that it is neither accepting its full responsibility nor utilizing all of its resources in religious training.

1. With the continued assumption of the functions of the home by other agencies, there is a marked tendency to delegate to these agencies, also, entire responsibility for religious training.

2. The home is the ideal place to teach reverence and habits of worship; in this it is failing.

(*a*) Young mothers are recognizing the value of physical care, but are giving little attention to character training.

(*b*) In homes where parents are indifferent to religion and not in contact with the Church, children are receiving no religious training.

(*c*) Parents generally are handicapped in giving effective religious instruction by lack of up-to-date materials and devices.

3. Inadequate understanding of child nature, of the process of habit formation, and of the technique of effective teaching results in the failure to relate religious instruction to the concrete situations of every day life.

4. Interdenominational differences and strife impair the effectiveness of home training and encourage children to view religious activities with indifference.

5. Too often the religious point of view of the home is out of harmony with the point of view of modern science. This requires the child to make difficult readjustments later, many of which, imperfectly made, result in confusion and indifference toward religious matters generally.

Suggestions for Solution

Improvement of these situations may be accomplished through study and reading courses for parents in child psychology. These courses can be stimulated and promoted by county home demon-

stration agents, rural ministers, teachers and other local workers in coöperation with the State University or Agricultural College, with the Parent-Teachers Association, the State Library, and other agencies interested in promoting child study. Study classes might meet regularly in homes, churches or schoolhouses.

It is believed that local workers can interest parents in the telling or reading of great stories of the Bible and other literature, in the dramatization of these stories, in the singing of hymns and playing of sacred music, in the use of good pictures in the home, and in the use of kindergarten materials to supplement the teachings of church and school.

Sources of Help

Should the State University, Agricultural College, or other State agency not be in a position to coöperate in improving these situations the following organizations doing work along the line of child training may be able to furnish suggestions.

American Association of University Women. 1634 I St., N. W., Washington, D. C.

The work of this organization is being financed by the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial and is under the direction of Dr. Lois Hayden Meek, Educational Secretary, who has worked out plans for study groups including books to be read.

American Child Health Association. 370 7th Avenue, New York City.

Federation for Child Study. 242 W. 76th St., New York City.

Merrill-Palmer School of Homemaking. 71 Ferry Ave., East, Detroit, Mich.

National Congress of Parents and Teachers. 1201 16th St., N. W., Washington, D. C.

International Young Men's Christian Association, 347 Madison Ave., New York City.

Young Women's Christian Association. 600 Lexington Ave., New York City.

We suggest that the following pamphlets and books be placed in local libraries, either community, school, Sunday School or Church:

Books

Religious Training

Cope, Henry F. Religious Education in the Family. Chicago, University of Chicago Press. 1915, 296 pp. $1.60 postpaid. The religious education of children of various ages.

Streibert, Murial Anne. Youth and the Bible. New York. Macmillan Co. 1924, 251 pp.

Fiske, G. Walter. Community Forces for Religious Education. Nashville Publishing House of the M. E. Church, South. 1922, 159 pp. The relation of home and community in the life of the early adolescent.

Betts, Anna Freelove. The Mother-Teacher of Religion. New York, Abingdon Press. 1922, 290 pp. $1.65 postpaid. Materials for the earliest lessons in religion in the home.

Child Psychology

Gruenberg, S. Your Child To-day and To-morrow. Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott Co., 1913. 234 pp. $1.75. The training of the pre-school child.

Patri, Angelo. Child Training. New York. D. Appleton and Co. 1922. 434 pp. $2.00. The training of the adolescent child.

Miller, H. C. The New Psychology and the Parent. New York, Thomas Seltzer, 1923. 241 pp. $1.75. The training of older children.

Stories for Children to Read

Olcott, F. J., ed. Bible Stories to Read and to Tell. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1916. 486 pp. $2.50. One hundred and fifty stories from the Old Testament. For children twelve to fourteen years.

——— Good Stories for Great Holidays. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1912. 483 pp. $3.00.

Stories for Grown-Ups to Read to Children Under Seven Years

Bailey, C. S. For the Children's Hour. Springfield, Mass., Milton Bradley Co., 1917. 333 pp.

Bryant, Sara Cone. How to Tell Stories to Children. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1905. $2.00.

——— Stories to Tell Children. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1907. $2.00.

Pamphlets

The Picture-hour in the Home. 1914. 16 pp. 15 cents.
Sunday in the Home. 1914. 16 pp. 15 cents.
The Religious Nurture of a Little Child. 1914. 22 pp. 20 cents.
Story Telling in the Home, by Wm. Byron Forbush. 1914. 22 pp. 20 cents.
Dramatics in the Home. 1913. 23 pp. 15 cents.
The Dramatic Instinct in Children. 1913. 15 pp. 15 cents.
Table Talk in the Home, by Edith Johnson. 15 cents.
Music in the Home, by Edith Lovell Thomas. 15 cents.
A Year of Good Sundays. 15 cents.

(The nine publications, except as otherwise indicated, are written by the Literary and Educational Staffs of the American Institute of Child Life and can be secured by sending the amount named to the Abingdon Press, 150 Fifth Ave., New York City.)

The Scaffolding of Character-Building, by W. H. Kilpatrick. 600 Lexington Ave., New York City. The Woman's Press. August, 1924. 20 cents. (Reprint.)

Child care. The Pre-School Age. By Mrs. Max West. 1922. 82 pp. (U. S. Dept. of Labor, Children's Bureau, Publication 30.) 10 cents.

Child Mentality and Management. Outlines for study. By Helen Thompson Woolley. 1922. 51 pp. (U. S. Dept. of Labor, Children's Bureau. Publication 91.) 5 cents.

Habit Clinics for the Child of Pre-School Age. By D. A. Thom. 1924. 71 pp. (U. S. Dept. of Labor. Children's Bureau. Publication 135.) 10 cents.

(The three publications named above can be secured by sending the amount named to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.)

Habit Training for Children. By Massachusetts department of mental diseases, Division of Mental Hygiene. 1924. 15 pp. A collection of nine leaflets. Complete set, 10 cents. 100 complete sets, $3.00. Individual leaflets, 50 cents per 100.

Experiences of the Child, How They Affect Character and Behavior. By C. M. Campbell. 1923. 7 pp. 10 cents.

Nervous Children and Their Training. By C. M. Campbell. 1922. 8 pp. 10 cents.

How to Avoid Spoiling the Child. By L. F. Barker. 12 pp. 10 cents.

(The four publications named above can be secured by sending the amount named to the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, 370 Seventh Avenue, New York City.)

Psychology of the Pre-School Period. By C. Macfie Campbell. 370 Seventh Ave., New York City. American Child Health Association, 1922. 5 pp. 6 cents. (Reprint.)

Playthings. By Bureau of Education experiments. 144 W. 13th St., New York City. 1923. 18 pp. (Bulletin No. 1, Ed. 3, revised.) 20 cents.

Assisted by

Prof. and Mrs. C. E. Lively, Columbus, Ohio.
Miss Anna Clark, National Board, Y. W. C. A., New York City.
Mrs. Charles Schuttler, Farmington, Mo.
Miss Elizabeth Alling, Norwalk, Ohio.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON RURAL SOCIAL WORK

LEROY RAMSDELL, *Chairman*

A year ago the Committee on Charities and Corrections of the American Country Life Association was reorganized. Changing its name to the Committee on Rural Social Work, and taking as its starting point the valuable survey of the field made by the older committee, under the able leadership of Miss Ida H. Curry, the Committee blocked out the following plan of campaign for the development of rural social work.

A PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPING RURAL SOCIAL WORK

A. *Objective:*

An adequate and practical organization for extending to and developing in all rural districts the best type of social work. We suggest the following general plan of organization as most completely fulfilling this end:

1. An official county board in every county * employing a trained social worker as full time executive agent, with trained assistants as needed and practicable, equipped to assist all communities in the county in dealing with all problems of social welfare including:

(*a*) Broken or incapable families requiring aid.

(*b*) Abused, neglected, dependent, delinquent and otherwise handicapped children, requiring care or protection by others than their parents.

(*c*) Care of the aged dependent.

(*d*) Care of feeble-minded and mentally diseased persons.

(*e*) Prevention of juvenile delinquency and crime.

(*f*) School attendance and child labor.

(*g*) Housing conditions.

(*h*) Community organization for any social welfare movement.

2. A social agent or group in each community prepared to deal with the various types of problems mentioned above working in coöperation with the county social agent.

3. An official State board or department employing a sufficient number of field agents equipped to give expert advice and assistance to the county social agents.

4. An effective means for placing all the resources of national social work agencies at the service of all county social agents as needed.

B. *General Procedure:*

1. The creation and development of an intelligent rural public opinion regarding standards of social welfare and means to their attainment are necessary. To this end, we propose that the American Country Life Association, working through our committee and

* A minority opinion filed by one member not present at the St. Louis meeting proposes that we should aim at the development of private as well as public county agencies and the establishment of a proper balance and a close coöperation between the two.

coöperating wherever possible with the national conferences and agencies interested in the rural field undertake to promote:

(*a*) A thorough consideration of rural problems on the programs of the National and State conferences of Social Work and the development of round tables for rural social workers as a regular part of the proceedings of such conferences.

(*b*) The development by State Commissioners of Public Welfare, or State Conferences of Social Work or both, or if desirable some other state organization, of regional conferences covering several counties for rural social workers and others interested in rural social work within the counties covered.

(*c*) Better understanding of the purpose and methods of social work on the part of educational authorities and particularly rural school teachers and superintendents.

(*d*) The provision of State funds to supplement local funds, where necessary, for the support of efficient county social work.

(*e*) The establishment of a syndicated editorial service for rural newspapers on social problems and any other means that may be found practicable for securing publicity on social work in the rural press.

(*f*) The establishment of a consultation bureau which shall assemble as far as possible the valuable experience of rural social workers in all parts of the country and make it available to all such workers who may ask for help in solving a particular local problem.

(*g*) The organization of county case conferences.

(*h*) The improvement by these means and any others that may be practicable, of the service rendered by rural social workers to their counties and communities.

2. The training of social workers for the rural field. We wish to call this problem to the attention of the Committee on Training for Rural Leadership, which committee we believe should properly assume the responsibility for its solution.

C. *Specific projects for 1924:*

Acting for and with the approval of the American Country Life Association, the Committee on Rural Social Work proposes in so far as practicable to accomplish the things listed below in reference to the elements of procedure outlined under B. I.

(*a*) To procure from all state conferences of social work a copy of the last program for the purpose of determining what is being done and what more ought to be done in the way of consideration of rural problems at these conferences. Also to ascertain what is the attitude of said conferences toward the consideration of rural problems. Also to secure if possible provision for a round table of rural social workers at the National Conference of Social Workers in 1924 in addition to the incorporation of rural problems into the regular program to whatever extent may be practicable. Also to secure round table discussion for rural social workers and more consideration of rural problems on the programs at state conferences as the need may be indicated in the survey.

(*b*) Secure from all State Commissioners of Public Welfare and all secretaries of State Conferences of social work a statement as to what is being done by their respective agencies in the promotion of regional conferences, especially in rural districts, for local social workers and local people interested in social work. Also to stimulate such agencies, where it seems necessary and practicable, to undertake such regional conferences.

(*c*) Endeavor to secure arrangements for speakers on social work at the National Convention of the National Education Association or at least in its rural section in 1924. Also to do the same for all state teachers' institutes.

(*d*) To bring the matter of providing state funds for subsidizing county social work to the attention of all state and national agencies promoting legislation.

(*e*) To communicate with a number of rural editors to determine their receptivity to such releases as might be sent out by a bureau such as we contemplate. Also to try to discover some local persons who can adapt releases for their local papers.

(*f*) To file in the office of the executive secretary of the Association all material coming to the attention of the Committee which might be useful in helping other rural social workers solve their problems. Also to circulate some of this material, if possible, through the bulletin of the Association as an experiment.

(*g*) Try to arrange for the publication of a pamphlet describing successful county case conferences such as have been developed in Ohio and Pennsylvania.

NOTES ON COMMITTEE PROGRAM

The committee discussed a plan of organization having for its objective a more or less distant goal to insure continuity and direction to its work. The committee is not in any sense opposed to the development of rural social work by private agencies where such work tends to create an intelligent public opinion with regard to the problems to be dealt with.

The committee understands that the social agent or group in each community will of necessity be unpaid. In some communities more than one group might be desirable but always there should be close coöperation between the groups.

While the committee wishes to emphasize the importance of providing abundant opportunity for rural social workers to engage in group discussion of their common problems, it also believes that discussion between rural and urban social workers is valuable and should be encouraged.

The committee rejected a proposal that regional conferences should cover from five to ten counties because it was felt that the size of the area should be determined by the conditions of the case and only such counties included as form a more or less natural group.

A proposal to negotiate directly with the people for the development of such conferences was rejected as tending to lessen the influence of those state agencies whose function is to render assistance to county and social workers. It was thought inadvisable at the present time to create a Federal subsidy for county social work. The use of private funds for this purpose would tend to pauperize communities, it was thought by some; others thought private funds should be used to promote training and special demonstrations.

Proposals to establish an editorial service and a consultation bureau, or the proposal to promote county case conferences were only slightly discussed. Several members expressed the belief that an editorial service would be welcomed by editors of rural papers. The chairman was authorized to investigate possibilities on all these projects and to make tentative experiments.

RURAL ROUND TABLE AT THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF SOCIAL WORK

Perhaps the outstanding achievement of the Committee during the past year was the organization of a round table meeting on rural

social work at the National Conference of Social Work in Toronto in June. We secured the services of Mr. E. C. Lindeman as presiding officer, and persuaded Miss Louise Cottrell, of the University of Iowa to lead off with a discussion of the work which is done by typical county social service leagues as they have been organized in Iowa. This was followed by informal discussions of the St. Johns County Welfare Federation of Florida and the Monmouth County League for Social Service in New Jersey. The Discussion of the afternoon turned chiefly upon the question of the relationship between public and private agencies in county social work. The meeting recommended that our committee should make a place in its objective for the private agency.

About seventy-five people attended this meeting, which seems to us to indicate a genuine demand for an opportunity such as we provided for rural people at the National Conference to get together to discuss their particular problems.

The meeting voted that a request be presented to the Reorganization Committee of the National Conference to include a regular section on rural problems if such could be made compatible with the plan worked out by that Committee. The meeting also formally requested our Committee to take the initiative in calling another round table meeting at next year's National Conference unless a regular section on rural social work was established.

ACTIVITIES OF STATE CONFERENCES

The Committee addressed an inquiry to the secretaries of all the State Conferences of Social Work in the country in an effort to determine just what the prospects are of increasing their activity in this field. We received replies from twenty-seven conferences. (A list of these states is attached at the end of this report.) All but three of these sent us copies of the program of their last conference. An examination of these programs and the comments in the letters of transmittal indicates that seventeen of these conferences regularly include in their formal programs one or more papers on some aspect of social work in rural districts. Of those not making such regular provision three are the industrial states of Massachusetts, New York and New Jersey, in all of which rural problems are given occasional consideration. In 1922, for instance, the theme of the entire State Conference in Massachusetts

was rural social work. Rural social work was given considerable attention in the New York State Conference in 1921 and 1922, and the New Jersey Conference in 1922.

Our second question was whether the conference provided a section meeting or a round table meeting where people from rural districts could get together and discuss the problems peculiar to their environment. Five of these twenty-seven conferences were making such provision regularly at the time of our inquiry and a sixth has been added to the list as a result of the inquiry. This addition is Connecticut, where Mr. Clarence King, the Secretary of the State Conference, responded to our inquiry with an enthusiastic request for suggestions and help in organizing such a round table in their 1924 Conference early in May.

At their request the Chairman of the Committee presided at this meeting which was attended by about seventy-five people from all parts of the state. Discussion touched upon such problems as the interpretation of case work to the community, and the complications of case work in rural communities, the need of more trained workers to give closer supervision to problem families, and the organization of county and community committees of lay people for social service. The meeting formally requested the Executive Committee of the State Conference to provide for a study of the desirability of organizing a State Council of Social Agencies and also to provide for a study aimed to discover the best method of providing adequate service for the rural districts of the state.

Only two state conferences report standing committees on rural problems. This is largely due to the fact that most conferences have been organized into sections along functional rather than territorial lines. This arrangement our Committee has felt to be sound, and we are not disposed at present to urge the organization of regular divisions of state conferences on rural problems. We do feel, however, that the leaders in each state most interested in the development of rural social work should see to it that the opportunity for informal discussion on those aspects of social work peculiar to rural districts is provided at each state conference for those coming from the rural districts.

Our third request was for information as to what the conference had done in the development of district conferences in various parts of the state. Six of the twenty-seven had attempted this development. The secretaries in these states are all enthusiastic about their

experience with district conferences. Seven of the secretaries are hoping to develop them in the future as soon as the financial resources of their organization will permit.

STUDY OF DISTRICT CONFERENCES

With the hope of getting material which would be helpful to those interested in developing district conferences, we addressed a preliminary questionnaire to five state conferences of social work which have been trying to organize district conferences within their respective states. Four conference secretaries replied. This is not a careful study, but it does help to throw into relief a number of problems which largely determine the possibility of making progress with the district conference idea.

The answers to the questionnaire concerning the value of the conferences throw considerable light on the purpose the organizers hoped to accomplish.

In Minnesota, conferences were organized by the five field secretaries of the Children's Bureau, who were familiar with conditions in their own localities. They were thus able to arouse interest in social case work and gave the public a clearer insight into the work of the Children's Bureau. The secretaries had charge of programs, speakers, etc., assisted by a committee of five women from the Children's Bureau.

The conferences in Wisconsin were arranged by the secretary of the State Conference at the request of some local person or group. He presented the most advanced methods in organized social work and tried to show how these methods could be best used in community organizations. Programs and speakers were arranged by the local committee. Local interest was aroused by people in each locality who personally advertised the conference in their own groups.

In the other two states heard from the conferences were organized by the President of the State Conference and by the Assistant Director of Institutions.

In all four states, even though the policies are quite different, the aim is apparently the same—to carry the idea of social work to the various communities in a more vital, comprehensive, and convincing way than is possible with a state conference.

The attendance at the conferences would indicate that to a considerable degree the purpose for which they were organized was

fulfilled. Some of the conferences lasted only one day, others were three days in length. At the one day conferences the attendance ranged from 30 in the morning to 150 in the evening, and at the longer conferences there were some times as many as 2,600.

Apparently the greatest obstacle to a thoroughgoing development of district conferences the country over is a lack of sufficient field workers to provide the executive leadership. Some of the larger national agencies have had notable success in developing district conferences within their own organizations. With few exceptions, however, the field staffs of national agencies, and of state agencies both public and private, have not been made available for the organization of district conferences. Everyone seems agreed, in principle, at least, that the social work needs of a rural district cannot be adequately met without the utmost possible coördination of effort between all the agencies interested. Here is a practical place to begin.

MISCELLANEOUS PROJECTS

In the matter of subsidies for rural social work and a syndicated editorial service the Committee is still seeking light and has taken no definite steps. The study of county case conferences is still awaiting the time of some member of the Committee to attend to it.

Many inquiries came to the office of the American Country Life Association from rural social workers in all parts of the country asking for help in solving some specific social problem. The Committee has finally worked out a procedure which it hopes will make this consultation service genuinely helpful. In those cases where the inquiry is for information which can be furnished by correspondence, the inquiry is referred to all the national agencies working in the field of the particular problem with the request that they submit the names of local workers in their organizations who have handled a similar problem successfully. These names are then referred to the applicant. In those cases where the inquiry deals with a problem where help cannot be readily rendered through correspondence the Committee refers it to the National agencies dealing with problems of that type with the request that they submit the name of some local worker in their organization who is within sufficiently easy traveling distance of the applicant to consult with the latter upon the ground and who is sufficiently well equipped to

advise upon the problem. These names are then referred to the applicant with the advice that she arrange to pay the traveling expense of one of these consultants.

LIST OF STATE CONFERENCES WHICH REPLIED TO INQUIRY

New York	Kansas	Washington	North Carolina
Michigan	Illinois	New Jersey	Pennsylvania
North Dakota	West Virginia	Georgia	Connecticut
Missouri	Indiana	Massachusetts	Ohio
Minnesota	Alabama	Delaware	South Carolina
Wisconsin	Louisiana	Maryland	Tennessee
Colorado	California	Iowa	

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORTATION

GEORGE H. VON TUNGELN, *Chairman*

At the Conference in St. Louis the Committee on Communications and Transportation appointed sub-committees who should report in 1924 their findings during the year.

These sub-committees were to study the work of religious organizations in the field of Transportation and Communications with special reference to religion in the country—to report on the space given to religion in the agricultural press—to report on railway, and highway transportation as related to rural life problems—to report on what place is given by public and private agencies in the country, to the rural church, in their programs—and to determine what work educational institutions are doing in the transportation and communication field with special reference to religion in the country.

Some of the committees completed their work and have sent in their reports, others will do so in the near future.

RELIGIOUS MATTER IN THE FARM PRESS

By HENRY A. WALLACE

Mr. Wallace studied the March, 1924, issues of twelve agricultural papers. Of these eight were weeklies, two semi-monthlies and two monthlies.

Seven of the eight weeklies contained 868 inches of religious

printed matter in the 28 issues of March. One of the weeklies contained no religious matter in March. Three of the seven weeklies regularly run Sabbath School Lesson notes, one regularly runs a weekly sermon and two run "Sermons in Epigrams." One paper also ran installments of Nichols' "Journey Thru the Bible." Other articles dealt with the country church.

One of the seven monthlies ran two articles on "The Journeys of a Preacher." The other devoted most of its space on the subject to two short sermons. In the four March issues of these two papers there were 100 inches devoted to religion.

One of the monthlies contained only a poem and a story on semi-religious lines. The other contained nothing on the subject in its March issue. This paper does, however, devote considerable space to the rural church in its columns from year to year.

If these papers are representative of the Agricultural Press and the March numbers are representative, then it is evident that more space is devoted to Sabbath School Lessons and Bible stories by the Agricultural Press than is devoted to the program, needs and accomplishments of the rural church. Is this due to a lack of program and accomplishments on the part of the rural church, due to a lack of general interest in such program and accomplishments, or is it due to the feeling on the part of the publishers that there is a greater need or that a greater good can be accomplished by sending the Sabbath School Lessons into the rural home?

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON RAILWAY AND HIGHWAY TRANSPORTATION

By R. E. PLIMPTON and F. C. HORNER

This report gives much of the history and present-day problems of transportation. It shows that there has been no great development in the steam railways in the last twenty years. The interurban electric lines, automobiles, motor buses and trucks, and the improved highways have served to prevent the continued growth of the steam railways. They are also able to reach communities not conveniently served by the steam railroads.

The tremendous development of highway transport is best indicated by the great number of motor vehicles and by the mileage of improved highways. There are now listed one car to every seven persons, and there are over 200,000 miles of surfaced roads, with

from thirty to forty thousand miles being added every year.

Within the next ten years, some 200,000 miles of the Federal Aid Highways will be added to our present system, giving a network of improved highways that will connect every market center of over 5,000 population in the country.

Nearly 90 per cent of the people will live within ten miles of this Federal system.

As practically all social life in the country depends upon the highway, certainly there is the strongest of incentives for a greater mileage of improved highways, and for making those we already have, useful the year round.

The general effect of this wonderful highway system of ours has been to expand the social horizon of the farm people. Often this has been at the expense of the smaller villages so many of which were thriving 20 or 30 years ago. One little center of this sort in the dairy section of northern New York has perhaps a hundred homes clustered around a railroad station, and a general store, and church. The railroad continues to run, although the service grows poorer each year. The church attempts to function, but has its trouble. One general store is still alive, although thirty years ago the hamlet boasted of three, all doing good business and providing for most of the wants of the neighborhood. The one general store carries on its shelves only the common, every-day necessities of food and house fittings. All the more expensive and important things are now bought from the city, some twenty miles away, to which people travel mostly in their automobiles. Those who have not their own motor cars are forced to take the train in order to make their important purchases.

The influence improved highways have on rural life is shown by the present methods of utilizing whole milk. Large increase in city population has, of course, tremendously increased the demand. In New York State, much of the milk formerly hauled by horse to nearby creameries and cheese factories is now marketed as whole milk. The farmer trucks it to the railroad; the latter carries it another step to the New York City dairy plants.

Another form of coöperative effort, is the transportation of children to the centralized grade schools and to the high schools. Steam or electric railroads in the East particularly handle this work, at half fare, as required by law. In the central and far western states, however, many school boards have purchased buses which are driven

by teachers, pupils or hired employees. Others contract with a private individual or a motor common carrier, and these furnish the school transportation.

THE PLACE GIVEN TO RELIGION IN THE COUNTRY IN THE PROGRAMS OF NATIONAL FARM AGENCIES

By FLORENCE E. WARD and E. L. KIRKPATRICK

This Committee sent a questionnaire to the national organizations listed below to secure from them information on what work they are doing in connection or coöperation with individuals or groups interested in the progress of religion in the country:

World Agriculture Society
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Society of Equity
Farmers' Educational and Coöperative Union
Farmers' Equity Union
Farmers' National Congress
Farmers' National Council
Federation of Jewish Farmers of America
International Farm Congress
National Agricultural Organization Society
National Grange of Patrons of Husbandry
United Farmers of America
Women's National Farm and Garden Association
National Council of Jewish Women
General Federation of Women's Clubs
Parent-Teachers Association

They found that of these 16 organizations the National Grange, the American Farm Bureau Federation and the National Council of Jewish Women probably make the most direct contact with the rural churches and rural religious organizations through their literature and leaders. All of the organizations, however, make contacts with the religious forces more or less directly by having their leaders appear on programs fostered and directed by religious leaders and organizations, or by having outstanding religious leaders appear on their programs.

These contacts may not always have a direct religious intent, but they have at least some religious effect. They certainly are not intended to be in any way hostile to religion.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

The United States Department of Agriculture has never stressed the improvement or development of any form of communication with regard to rural religious institutions. Indirectly the Department has made certain contributions to rural church groups, and to rural religion in general, through the distribution of Farmers' Bulletins and other publications, the loan of lantern slides and motion picture films, and the provision of speakers at various times. In fact, a great deal of the extension work in the South is forwarded through the rural churches.

One or two instances have been noted where landscaping plans for rural church grounds have been furnished by the Department. No record has been kept of the number of bulletins or leaflets of interest to and distributed through rural church groups.

THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

This Committee made no study of the rural work of the American Red Cross. It is, of course, well known that rural Red Cross nurses and Red Cross Community Executive Secretaries work in very close coöperation with the schools and in many communities in just as close coöperation with the churches and religious leaders.

THE WORK OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The sub-committee on the work of educational institutions in the field of transportation and communications sent out a questionnaire of seven questions, to sixty teachers of rural sociology in universities and colleges in the North Central States. Much interesting information was obtained from the replies.

It was found in some instances that practice teachers from Training Schools were sent into the rural districts, and that these teachers were taking an active part in the religious life of the community and as a result of their work the membership of the Sunday Schools was greatly increased.

Church and local news and market prices are daily broadcast by radio.

Special study is being made on transportation and communications.

Special courses are given in Religious Education and the problems of the rural church.

Correspondence courses, lectures and entertainments through Extension Divisions are made available for rural communities.

Short summer- or training-schools for rural ministers are held each year at some educational institution.

Farm bureaus and women's clubs are affecting rural religion favorably, inasmuch as they encourage and promote the building of good roads, and emphasize the necessity of paying attention to the social and political issues of the day.

The secular press takes rather an indifferent attitude towards rural religion and the church in most of the states.

Opinions concerning chatauquas, lecture courses and revivals and their influence on the religious life of rural people varied. In most states they were thought to have a good influence.

Most of the states agreed that the use, extension and improvement of radios, telephones, automobiles, good roads, etc., were in the main beneficial to rural life and the rural church.

The rural church is being enlarged in its scope and function.

The automobile is helping to fuse the rural and urban community into one, as regards religious and social matters.

The effect of auto-touring and camping on rural life is considered good in most states. It tends "to freshen and renew rural life by multiplying the human and nature contacts." Others consider it detrimental as it makes the people in the rural communities discontented with their lot, and long for a broader life than is possible for them. In some communities it brings in a rough class of people who are apt to corrupt the morals of the rural people.

Auto-touring is becoming more popular each year for both farm and city families. It is generally a family affair and this is the thing which commends it most of all. The entire family goes. Undoubtedly it refreshes all who go and they come back with new ideas, greater appreciation of each other, their own home, their country and again enter upon their own individual and group work with greater vim and enthusiasm.

STATE AND GOVERNMENTAL COÖPERATION WITH RELIGIOUS FORCES AND INSTITUTIONS

Samples of such coöperation are bulletins published by State Colleges of Agriculture in coöperation with the United States De-

partment of Agriculture. These bulletins deal almost wholly with the rural church and its problems.

Then there have appeared in recent years many rural social surveys gotten out by the State Colleges of Agriculture. Nearly all of these include a study of the rural church. In a number of such surveys made or directed in recent years by the writer it has been found that, with but one exception in the case of a single individual in a single family, where neither parent is a church member that not a child in these families is a church member.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORTATION ON ACTIVITIES OF NATIONAL RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

By HERMANN N. MORSE
Rural Work Department
Presbyterian Board of Home Missions

I. PROGRAMS OF NATIONAL OR OTHER GENERAL RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

In considering the work of most general organizations, two difficulties are encountered. The first is the difficulty of distinguishing between efforts which are designed to reach the whole constituency of a given organization, including its rural constituency, and efforts which are designed primarily or exclusively for rural areas. The second is the difficulty of distinguishing between the efforts which are designed primarily to promote the work of a particular organization and efforts which look primarily toward the improvement or direction of work conducted locally in rural communities.

(1) *General Promotional Activities.*

Every general organization which is dependent for its support on the voluntary contributions of its constituency has a more or less elaborate promotional program and organization. Such promotion activities are apt to be somewhat differentiated according to the community in which they are to be carried out. Thus, different methods would be used in rural areas than would be used in cities. Rural churches and individuals in rural communities are reached by such promotion efforts. A great variety of methods are used in such promotional activities.

(2) *Efforts Designed to Interest the Constituency at Large in the Particular Needs of Rural Communities.*

(*a*) *Missionary Agencies.* Practically all missionary agencies conduct a certain amount of work in rural communities which is made the basis of publicity and educational material to be used throughout their constituency. Most denominations in this way stress the work conducted in frontier rural communities of the West and Southwest, in the Southern Mountains, in special types of rural industrial communities, such as lumber camps, oil and gas fields, etc. Also, information is widely disseminated by these Boards as to the general needs of churches everywhere and of rural communities, including their economic, social and educational needs. Particular instances that may be noted are the following:

1. In the Reformed Church in the United States a special arrangement is made whereby one issue annually of the church papers is devoted to the consideration of rural matters.

2. "Association Men," published by the Y. M. C. A., has a regular rural edition.

3. The joint Home Missionary text book, prepared by the Missionary Education Movement, is from time to time devoted to a discussion of the rural church.

(*b*) *General Agencies.* The Federal Council of Churches, through its Department of Research and Education, publishes a weekly "Information Service," which contains regularly a considerable amount of rural material. The Federal Council, through this same department, is also conducting a number of special rural studies in which it has the advice of a Rural Advisory Committee.

The Institute of Social and Religious Research has made extensive rural surveys. The published volumes embodying the results have been circulated and the striking conclusions have also been given publicity through press accounts, reviews, etc.

(3) *Efforts Designed to Reach the Rural Communities Directly in the Interests of Their Own Work.*

A great variety of methods are used by different denominations varying somewhat according to their polity and form of organization. The following have been reported by the denominations concerned.

(*a*) *Rural Publications.* In the Protestant Episcopal Church a good deal of such material is included from time to time in the two

magazines published by the Department of Publicity of the National Council, "The Spirit of Missions," with a circulation of 35,000, and "The Church at Work," with a circulation of 565,000.

The Reformed Church in the United States publishes a little four-page periodical known as "The Rural Church Worker," which carries to their rural churches information as to the activities of their Rural Church Department, helpful notes as to methods of work, etc.

The Methodist Episcopal Church from time to time has issued a publication known as "The Rural News Letter." Large use is also made of their various denominational papers.

The Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., until this summer published a bi-monthly magazine known as "Home Lands" which has just been consolidated with the Country Life Bulletin (now known as Rural America), of the American Country Life Association. Rural material is inserted from time to time in other denominational papers and special pamphlets, lectures, etc., are prepared dealing with questions of method.

In the Southern Methodist Church there are a considerable number of conference or district papers, certain of which are very specifically of importance in this field.

In addition, practically all mission boards publish various kinds of manuals of church work, descriptions of particularly successful enterprises, etc.

(*b*) *Use of Field Men.* This varies greatly according to the form of denominational organization. Practically all denominations have a certain number of field men who are available for church visitation, for conferences and who are of assistance to churches in working out their local programs and in securing the interest of their local constituency. There is an increasing tendency to employ field men specially trained along certain particular lines, as specialists in religious education or in Daily Vacation Bible Schools, specialists in methods of rural church work and, in a few cases, specialists in problems of rural health, who are available for the use of local churches.

(*c*) *Summer Schools and Conferences.* There has been a very interesting development in the last dozen years of summer schools for country ministers. Most of the larger denominations have now some definite method for offering training for rural work in summer schools or conferences. In addition, there are held every year a very great number of conferences of many sorts to which rural

ministers, laymen and young people are invited. These include summer assemblies, young people's conferences, student conferences, etc. In this way many thousands of people from rural communities are reached each summer in the interest of larger programs both for their churches and their communities as a whole.

(*d*) *Rural Leadership Training in Colleges and Seminaries.* The Board of Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Church has been instrumental in placing in a considerable number of their colleges and seminaries professors of rural leadership, who not only teach courses related to rural community organization and rural social welfare, but have a large measure of responsibility in the way of extension work in the area surrounding their particular institutions.

(*e*) In some instances religious organizations have participated in fairs, land congresses and similar gatherings for the purpose of bringing matters relating to religious life and organizations to the attention of the large numbers of people who attend such events. For example, we have had exhibits of Sunday School and Vacation Bible School work at the State Fair in Iowa this year and at County Fairs.

(*f*) Most denominations, to a greater or less extent, coöperate in the holding of country life conferences and institutes in local churches or with a group of local churches. These are frequently two- or three-day affairs, the program including not only discussions of church work and religious education, but of farm methods, health, recreation, home management and kindred topics.

(*g*) The Y. W. C. A. makes the following report of methods used in its organization to influence rural opinion in general:

"There are provided for the use of local, rural communities and Y. W. C. A. Organizations 'The Woman's Press' (the official magazine of the Y. W. C. A.); speakers through a Speakers Bureau (both American and foreign speakers); lists of plays and pageants—plays, pageants, books on recreation, religion and so forth published by 'The Woman's Press'; study courses on all matters emphasized by the National Y. W. C. A. Convention, also study courses on special subjects of interest to girls; posters on health, recreation and international phases of the Y. W. C. A.; conferences, both national and local; publicity—clip sheets sent to all local associations for publication in papers every week and sent direct to 1,200 newspapers and religious weeklies; lists of books on rural life and all subjects of interest to rural people; two and three day institute meetings for training leaders and from headquarters printed help and national speakers; special help to local associations on publicity material when requested for special occasions; speakers from the Rural Communities Department at meetings of other national agencies."

(4) *Efforts Looking Toward the Extension of Work in Unoccupied Areas.*

Practically all national organizations have more or less well developed programs for extending work into unoccupied areas. The most important methods used are the following:

(*a*) *Field Men and Other Church Representatives.* In some cases, men are employed as pastors at large who range over a considerable territory conducting services in communities without other religious facilities and looking to the establishment and nurturing of new churches.

(*b*) *Sunday School Missionaries.* The Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., employs one hundred and fifty Sunday School missionaries. Each of these men is assigned a large territory, and itinerates constantly in communities having no church organization, where he establishes or revives Sunday Schools, initiates and directs various forms of community activities, social and religious, does personal pastoral work and in other ways attempts to bring the ministrations of the church to communities which would be otherwise unprovided for.

(*c*) *Interdenominational Efforts.* The aim of these efforts has been to discover communities having no religious facilities and to allocate them to the responsibility of particular denominations which will undertake to develop work in them.

(*d*) In some cases use has been made by some organizations of chapel cars, that is, special cars equipped for the holding of services, and of missionary launches which visit isolated communities on the coast or on scattered islands.

(*e*) In some instances denominations have carried out definite evangelistic automobile tours. For example, several denominations have coöperated each summer in an automobile tour through unoccupied parts of Utah where tent meetings have been held.

(*f*) The Y. W. C. A. makes the following report of its methods for developing extension work in counties where it has no local organization:

"At present between 100 and 110 city associations are working with girls' clubs and giving help from other departments in the rural areas surrounding them. Policies and plans have been worked out for this relationship. A special study with the help of professors of sociology is being carried on in order that this relationship may be worked out on the most scientific principles.

"Promotion Area Scheme. This is a plan by which a secretary financed from headquarters works with an interesting group of local women on the following projects:

Study Courses: Aims, purposes and methods of the Y. W. C. A.; projects which demonstrate the Y. W. C. A. methods, such as girls' clubs, conferences, camps and so forth. This may extend over six months to three years and it is a plan of preparing areas for organization.

Corresponding Membership: In 1922 the National Young Women's Christian Association provided a plan for relating girls and women to the national organization by correspondence. It is called Corresponding Membership. These isolated persons are sent material from headquarters which specially relate to our national issues, such as internationalism, citizenship and so forth.

Registered Girls' Clubs: We are allowing the Girl Reserve program to be used in rural communities with certain restrictions and these clubs are related to the Girl Reserve Department.

Publications: The publications of The Woman's Press are distributed through rural libraries; special effort being made here at this time to send to departments of sociology (rural) and to meetings of various agencies dealing with rural life.

Student Leadership: Very important service with country girls is being carried on by the National Rural Communities Department in connection with the Student Department, since a large proportion of college women are from farms and little towns.

Rural Speakers at student conferences, this year at four, reaching about 1,200 students with a special message on country life. Plans for discussion groups carried on in the colleges. Many students turned to the Departments of Sociology for special work. Classes were held in many colleges for two weeks on the problems of teen-age girls and organization."

(5) *The Organization of Denominations for the Promotion of Rural Work.*

The mission boards of the larger denominations have one after another made provision in their organizations for special rural work departments or committees with specialized workers in charge. The first such department was organized by the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions some fifteen years ago. Other denominations which have made such provision now include the Methodist Episcopal, the Southern Methodist, the Protestant Episcopal, Reformed in the United States, Congregational, Northern Baptist and Roman Catholic. In certain other denominations, as the Moravian and Southern Presbyterian, Country Life Commissions have been appointed. The Northern Baptist Convention has provided in a number of states State Rural Church Directors.

In many of the larger Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, special associations of country ministers have been formed for fellowship and mutual help.

In a number of instances in the Methodist and Southern Methodist Churches, districts which are primarily or exclusively rural have made notable experiments in the development of Conference programs for the promotion of their rural work.

II. PROGRAMS OF LOCAL RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

(1) *Particular Methods of Publicity, Communication and Extension Developed by Local Organizations.*

It would be impossible within the limits of this report or on the basis of any knowledge in hand to deal adequately with the question of the variety of methods developed by local organizations. These necessarily differ according to local needs as well as according to the polity of the particular denomination. A number of careful studies have been made in this field, notably by the Institute of Social and Religious Research, which has published two volumes dealing with this question, "Churches of Distinction in Town and Country" and "Tested Methods in Town and Country Churches."

Various denominations have made use of certain specified methods:

(*a*) Public addresses other than at regular church services, in particular, addresses on themes related to general rural welfare.

(*b*) The distribution of literature, such as farm journals, government reports, State Department Bulletins on Health Education, etc.

(*c*) Conduct of institutes, conferences, chatauquas, lyceums, special study classes, short term schools, and other organizations for rural welfare.

(*d*) Plays, dramatics, pageantry in rural churches and Sunday Schools.

(*e*) Exhibits of Sunday Schools or Vacation Bible Schools at county fairs.

(*f*) Moving pictures and stereopticons.

(*g*) Printed bulletins or regular post card announcements; publication of church magazine or other periodical publicity.

(*h*) Bulletin boards.

(*i*) Use of telephone or radio.

Many other methods might be mentioned. The National Catholic Welfare Conference of the Roman Catholic Church gives the following report on its religious correspondence courses:

"The only feature that I would undertake to report on is that of religious correspondence courses, of which our Bureau has had two prepared, both of which have been used quite widely. These courses have been prepared under the direction of Monsignor Victor Day of Helena, Montana, who is supervisor of religious correspondence courses for the Catholic Rural Life Bureau. These courses are divided into from a dozen to twenty lessons, which are to be sent out weekly from November to April. The method of conducting the class work has varied. In a number of cases rural pastors have taken the responsibility for mailing out the lessons to farmers in their parishes and of correcting the lessons which are returned. In the State of Oregon the issuing of the lessons has been put in the hands of a Sisters' Convent, which has attended to the correction of the papers and issuing of the diplomas."

There has been very remarkable extension during the last few years of daily Vacation Bible Schools and of week-day religious education in rural and small town communities.

There has been increasing interest in the coöperation of churches locally in the carrying out of surveys and every-family visitations.

There is increasing interest in the advantages of combining adjacent country churches, especially in sparsely settled areas, in groups or "Larger Parishes." The Congregational Church, in particular, has carried forward some highly successful experiments in such "Larger Parishes."

In some rural churches with scattered parishes the so-called group organization has been tried; that is, the families contiguous to each other in a certain part of the parish are gathered in a group organization under a group leader. One rural Presbyterian church conducted a series of very successful schools of missions, held simultaneously at some six or seven different points in its parish.

Increasingly, the churches in small towns and in counties are uniting in county or community federations of churches. Fellowship and extension are the primary objects of such federations. In like manner, there are in many counties, county Sunday School associations which are of value in improving methods of Sunday School work.

Individual churches might be cited which have made extensive use of other interesting experiments; for example, the following: A neighborhood house, conducted in a mountain community, has a very good radio receiving set. On stated occasions everybody in the community who has a telephone and who cannot be present per-

sonally at the community house listens in, in that way to the program being broadcast. This occasion is taken by the worker in charge for telephone instruction along the lines of community interest.

Numbers of churches are reported which have arranged to bring families from outlying districts to the church in trucks for the regular services. A Presbyterian church in southern Pennsylvania which at one time maintained a private academy, now uses the buildings each summer for a Bible conference.

A great number of old churches have regular home-coming festivals or anniversary celebrations.

Many churches have definite coöperative arrangements with various organizations in their communities for the promotion of matters of common interest.

In an increasing number of communities the Church forces are maintaining community or neighborhood houses, supporting chautauquas, lyceums or lecture courses, arranging for demonstrations by experts from the state agricultural college, holding community fairs or exhibits, etc.

In a few instances we have information of mission boards maintaining public health nurses in impoverished communities, also of mission boards assisting in the maintenance of public schools beyond the term for which public money is available.

In very many communities, especially in the southern mountains, mission boards maintain schools, hospitals and similar enterprises.

In one community in California, the church not only maintains a very successful community house, but edits and publishes a community newspaper.

Such instances could be multiplied without number, but these are illustrative of the variety of enterprises carried on by local organizations.

2. The following statement is furnished by the Y. M. C. A. as to their program of local work:

"There is unmistakably a direct relationship between efficient Y. M. C. A. work in the town and country field and good tools with which to work. Included in good tools in a broad sense are:

1. Good roads
2. The automobile
3. Telephone
4. Radio
5. Newspaper publicity
6. Printed reports, publications, bulletins, etc.

"The introduction of the automobile into our plan of operation has made it possible to reach more than twice as many communities as formerly.

"In many of our local communities systematic methods of keeping the public informed are in operation. Many secretaries have regular mailing lists to which are sent items of interest each week. Others have definite space granted to them in the town newspapers. All publish in some form leaflets, bulletins, books and annual reports. Many of these are profusely illustrated. The motion picture machine and the stereopticon are regarded as indispensable pieces of machinery in several of our counties, and many of our men conduct regular exhibitions at county fairs and other places where people gather together in large numbers. One of our oldest counties, Windsor, Vermont, has for years conducted at the State Fair a social service center where supervised play for children, rest rooms with nurses in attendance, free ice water, free reading matter and stationery, and a general information booth have been maintained first in a large tent and of late years in a building erected upon recommendation of the Governor of the State, and turned over to the Y. M. C. A. to operate. In this building is a most complete exhibit of an all year round program of the Association. Many maintain bulletin boards in post offices, railroad stations and other places where people gather.

"An encouraging feature in recent days is the growing interest of City Associations in the work carried on in the adjacent country districts.

"The significance of this new move is far-reaching. We believe it is rapidly breaking down the unfriendly rivalry and jealousy which formerly was a great menace to progress in both city and country.

"In Sedgwick County, Kansas, we have a particularly fine illustration of extension methods. Here the City Y. M. C. A., the City Federation of Churches and the County Organization have united in a plan to make available the program of the Association to the boys and young men within a radius of twenty-five miles from Wichita. Good roads, the automobile and the telephone make possible the frequent visitation of city men to the country, and vice versa."

3. As to the Y. W. C. A., it is understood that data as to their local program was secured by another member of the Committee dealing with women's organizations.

III. GENERAL TENDENCIES

There seems to be no clear consensus of opinion as to the effect of improved methods of communication and transportation upon rural church work.

If I might venture my personal opinion, the tendency appears to me to be about as follows:

(*a*) In closely settled sections where there are frequent villages and towns, it is increasingly difficult to maintain open country

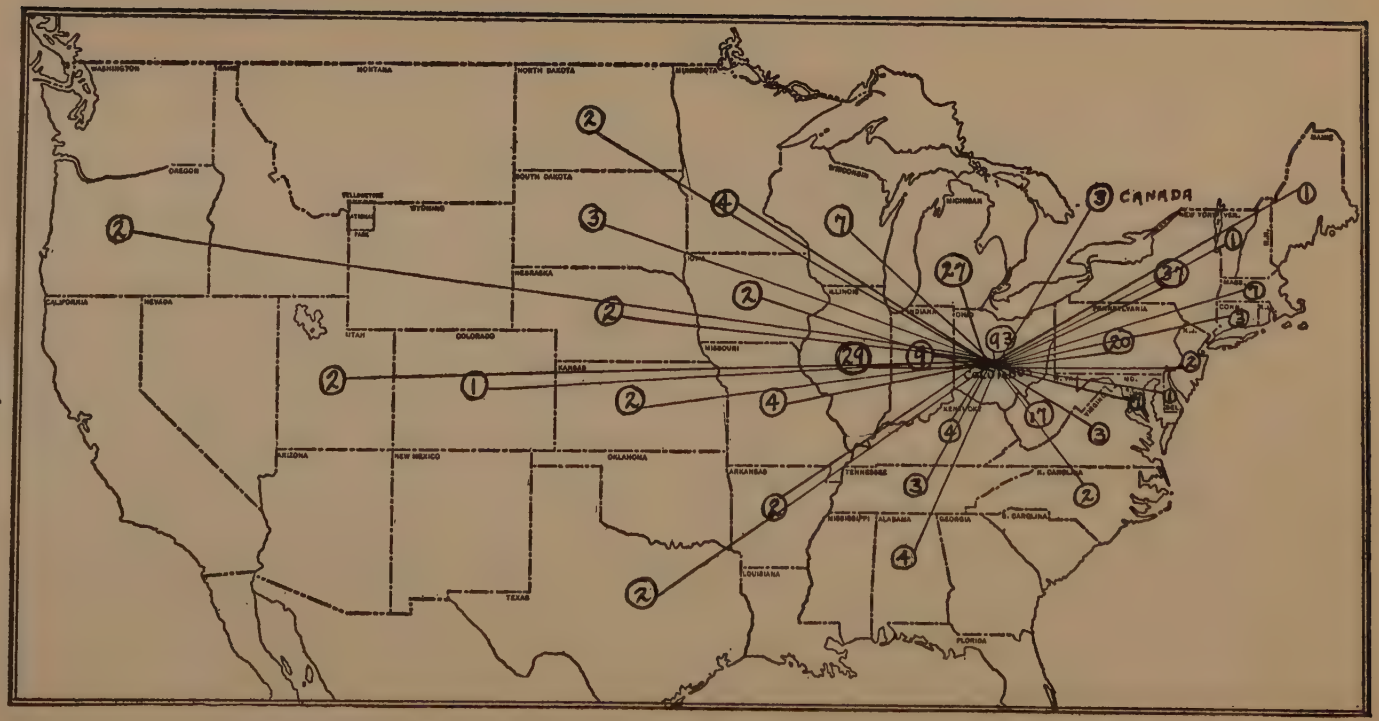
churches in the vicinity of towns. Town churches, which are usually better equipped, draw away enough people from the adjacent country churches to weaken those churches. On the other hand, the town churches have not, generally speaking, extended into the country sufficiently to take the place of the country churches. There are exceptions, of course, but on the average the country church has to be fairly well out from town to be unaffected by this pull.

(*b*) You may, consequently, have to expect to rely increasingly on town and village churches in these closely settled areas. It will be necessary, however, to maintain churches and Sunday schools in the open country. That these should be related in some way to the stronger churches in the community centers, some development of the larger parish plan of organization seems practicable.

(*c*) In the areas with more widely scattered population, an extensive program centered about the church in some strategically located center with methods of transportation provided where feasible, or with local units for religious education and community and social work, is the most likely reliance. Experiments with the larger parish organization, with a staff covering a considerable area from some central point, are highly significant.

(*d*) The extended use of the radio, supplementing such larger parish organization, would help in the solution of the very difficult problem of reaching the widely scattered populations, particularly in the intermountain states, for which up to the present time we have been unable to develop adequate methods of religious service.

(*e*) Generally speaking, we are finding that we have far too many churches in the ordinary rural community placed too near together. This is quite aside from the question of interdenominational competition. Churches of the same denomination are frequently too near together. They were established to meet the convenience of methods of transportation in vogue at the time. Under present circumstances, they have too restricted a parish. We will gradually have to consolidate churches to give to each church a larger area and a larger parish unit which will warrant the maintenance of the kind of equipment and organization which is necessary according to our modern ideas of church and community work.



CONFERENCE DELEGATES CAME FROM THIRTY-THREE STATES AND CANADA.

SIXTY-SEVEN PER CENT. CAME FROM STATES TOUCHED BY AND INCLUDED IN THE THREE HUNDRED MILE RADIUS.

BUSINESS OF THE AMERICAN COUNTRY LIFE ASSOCIATION TRANSACTED AT THE COLUMBUS CONFERENCE

Monday Morning, November 10th, before the close of the session:

President Butterfield, presiding, called on Professor Walter Burr, Chairman of the Committee on Nominations, to present the report of the Nominating Committee, which was as follows:

For President, Kenyon L. Butterfield

For Vice-President, Charles J. Galpin

For Second Vice-President, Mrs. Charles C. Schuttler

For Executive Committee, E. L. Morgan and C. C. Taylor, re-nominated for three years.

Dr. Galpin declined the nomination for Vice-President.

On motion the Secretary was instructed to cast a unanimous ballot for the election of the above-named officers with the exception of that of First Vice-President.

Moved that the selection of the First Vice-President be referred to the Committee on Nominations for further recommendation.

Monday evening, November 10th, President Butterfield in the chair:

The Executive Secretary was called upon to make his report, as of November 1st, 1923, to October 31st, 1924, which is epitomized as follows:

Among the outstanding events and achievements are:

Two Russell Sage Foundation grants of $5,000 each.

Constituency very materially increased.

Publicity in the press after our St. Louis conference and on "Rural Religion," anticipating our Columbus conference, which might be considered notable.

Consolidation of Country Life Bulletin with "Home Lands," thus enlarging its usefulness.

Publication of three volumes of Annual Conference Proceedings which were issued to members.

Renewed interest in the National Council of Agencies Engaged in Rural Social Work resulting from the Toronto conference.

Coöperation with many other agencies.

Material increase in organized Collegiate Country Life Clubs.

Activity in committee service, in research and in promotion of membership.

Incorporation and other steps taken for a sound business administration.

Special service rendered to rural women's club leaders.

Preparation for this conference, a difficult task.

Welding of international relationships as the result of correspondence, and interchange of visits of country life leaders from other nations and ours.

Comparative statements show encouraging increase:

Total Constituency:	1923	1924
Members, Bulletin Subscribers and Contributors..	885	3,683
Contributions—Individual	$1,730	$6,775
Number of Contributors.....	19	1,781
Bulletin Subscriptions (Including Members)	700	3,000
Pieces of mail dispatched.....	30,000	94,100
Foundation Grants	$4,000	$8,611

The number of volumes of the proceedings of the national conferences on hand as of June 30, 1924 (Rural Home as of November 1st) were:

Vol. I	Objectives in Country Life.....	19
Vol. II	Rural Health	547
Vol. III	Rural Organization	211
Vol. IV	Town and Country Relations.....	236
Vol. V	Country Community Education.....	731
Vol. VI	Rural Home	1,500
	Total Volumes on Hand.....	3,244

The Country Life Bulletin, which was published monthly with the exception of July and August, increased from four pages in January to sixteen pages in September, when it was consolidated with "Home Lands." The circulation increased from a thousand to 3,000. The Bulletin is being increasingly used for reference and study by classes in Rural Sociology.

An all-day session of The National Council of Agencies Engaged in Rural Social Work was held, when a continuation committee was appointed to study recognized problems and try to find solutions for them.

Fifteen regularly organized chapters of Collegiate Country Life Clubs have been enrolled.

The Association was legally incorporated on May 1, 1924.

Various standing committees have rendered valuable service to the work of the Association and have been in continuous correspondence with the office in connection with their research work. Many agencies have availed themselves of information and reference material and counsel in policies and programs.

The office force was taxed to the limit during the year. Inquiries through the mail for help have steadily increased.

Editorial work, visits from state and foreign leaders, conferences and committee meetings, delivering lectures and traveling have occupied much of the Secretary's time.

Preparation of the conference was a most difficult and delicate task as there were many contending factors and forces to be adjusted.

Miss Mabel Carney and Dr. Brunner, both of New York, have been of great assistance in business and other matters, and Dr. Butterfield has also been a great help and inspiration.

Professor Campbell presented the claims for financial support to the members as a result of which personal pledges were made with the result as recorded below.

Tuesday afternoon, November 11th:

The regular business meeting of the Association was called to order on Tuesday afternoon, at 4:15 o'clock, with President Butterfield in the chair.

Professor Burr, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, announced the nomination of L. J. Taber, the Master of the National Grange, for the position of Vice-President.

Moved that the report of the Committee be adopted and the Secretary be instructed to cast the unanimous ballot of the Association for Mr. Taber as First Vice-President.

To meet the requirements of the Articles of Legal Incorporation according to the laws of New York State, it was necessary to establish a Board of Directors. An Amendment to the Constitution therefore was presented, as follows:

"Wherever the term, 'Executive Committee,' is used in the Constitution and By-Laws, the term, 'Board of Directors,' be substituted."

Moved that the above amendment to the Constitution, proposed by the Executive Committee, be adopted. It was seconded and received more than a two-thirds vote.

The Executive Committee submitted another amendment which provides for important committees with a view that some of these special committees may be continued as standing or permanent committees. The amendment as submitted was as follows:

"That the new Board of Directors be authorized to appoint such special committees as may be necessary."

Moved that the above proposed amendment by the Executive Committee be adopted. It received more than a two-thirds vote.

Telegrams from the National Council of Catholic Women, Texas

Federation of Women's Clubs, Home Community Committee, American Farm Bureau and County Coöperation Committee, and Mrs. W. C. Martin, were read, conveying greetings from these assembled gatherings to the conference. The Secretary was instructed to respond appropriately to these messages.

The Treasurer's report was presented by Mr. Campbell. (See page 201 for Public Auditor's report of financial status of the Association.)

Professor Campbell again took up the issue of helping to reduce the financial deficit, submitted suggested quotas by states, varying from $30 to $500. As a result of the informal canvass, twenty-four states assumed their quotas.

The financial appeal at the Conference resulted as follows:

Membership receipts	$ 530.00
Members paid and pledged in addition	650.00
24 State delegations pledged to raise state quotas totaling over	3,500.00

A grand total of over $4,700 was underwritten toward the $6,000 that was necessary after the Association had already raised $19,000 to meet the Russell Sage Foundation's conditions of its $10,000 grant toward a $25,000 budget for the year.

Moved that the Convention express to the Executive Secretary and Mr. Harrison Elliott their deep appreciation of the type of convention which had proven so profitable this year.

Moved that the Convention express its appreciation and thanks to those who had charge of the local arrangements in Columbus, the hotel management, the press, speakers, group leaders and all who contributed in any wise to help make the Convention a success.

There being no other business the meeting adjourned.

AMERICAN COUNTRY LIFE ASSOCIATION
COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL CONDITION
December 31, 1923 and December 31, 1924

ASSETS:	1923		1924	
Cash in bank		$ 41.51		$ 25.56
Revolving fund		500.00		750.00
Books on hand, at cost		2,147.00		2,773.14
Accounts receivable		.....		24.20
Prepaid items, rent 1924		100.00		
Office equipment	$83.03		$539.33	
Less, Reserve for depreciation	....		53.93	
		83.03		485.40
Total assets		2,871.54		4,058.30

Deficit:		
1923	3,090.44	3,090.44
1924	.....	7,029.04
	$5,961.98	$14,177.78
LIABILITIES:		
Accounts payable	$5,361.98	$ 9,877.78
Bank loans payable	600.00	4,300.00
	$5,961.98	$14,177.78

* On December 31, 1924, the Association held unpaid pledges as follows:

Contributions and Renewals:	
Personal	$ 175.00
State quotas	2,685.00
	$2,860.00

These items were not entered herein and were not considered in the statement of income.

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURES

for the year ended December 31, 1924

March 14, 1925.

American Country Life Association,
Charles F. Jenkins, Treasurer,
232 South 7th Street,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Sirs:

In accordance with your request, we have audited the books and accounts of the AMERICAN COUNTRY LIFE ASSOCIATION from January 1, 1924, to December 31, 1924, and we submit herewith a report upon our examination, together with statements showing the financial position of the association at that date and the income account for the year then ended.

(Signed) LYBRAND, ROSS BROS. & MONTGOMERY,
Accountants and Auditors.

INCOME:

Membership:		
Renewals	$ 1,213.05	
New	1,377.00	
Affiliated	80.00	
Contributions:		
Individual	8,277.86	
Foundations	10,111.35	
Bulletin subscriptions	155.20	
Book Sales	495.37	
Miscellaneous income	95.29	
Total income		$21,805.12

EXPENDITURES:

Administration:			
Salaries	10,284.77		
Rent, New York office	1,249,36		
Printing, stationery and postage	803.67		
Telephone and telegraph	268.16		
Traveling expense	1,494.45		
Committee Service	67.38		
Interest on bank loans	204.58		
Depreciation on office equipment	53.93		
Miscellaneous expenses	339.31		
		$14,765.61	
Membership and finance promotion:			
Office salaries	1,286.16		
Outside salaries	1,611.25		
Postage and addressing	3,176.00		
Booklets, printed material, etc.	3,158.55		
Miscellaneous	120.10	9,352.06	
Country Life Bulletin:			
Editorial, research and art service	545.55		
Printing and mailing	1,587.97		
		2,133.52	
Conference and convention:			
Convention expenses	744.61		
Printing, publishing, etc.	391.33		
		1,135.94	
Books on proceedings:			
Printing and publishing	2,073.17		
On hand, January 1, 1924	2,147.00		
	4,220.17		
Less, On hand, December 31, 1924	2,773.14		
		1,447.03	
Total expenditures			$28,834.16
Deficit for year			7,029.04
			$21,805.12

PROGRAM OF THE SEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN COUNTRY LIFE ASSOCIATION

STUDENT SECTION

Nov. 7 and 8, 1924

Ohio Union, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

FRIDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 7

8:00 Opening of the Conference—Pres. Kenyon L. Butterfield, East Lansing, Mich.

A Rural Attitude Ideal—Miss Anna Clark, New York, N. Y.
The Present Rural Situation—How can the Rural Church Meet it?—C. M. McConnell, Chicago, Ill.

SATURDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 8

9:00 The Program of the Rural Church.
Leadership: (a) Selection; (b) Training—Prof. A. Z. Mann, St. Paul, Minn.
Recreation—Miss Marie Carothers, Plymouth, Ind.
Coöperation with Other Agencies—Prof. C. E. Lively, Columbus, Ohio.

SATURDAY NOON, NOVEMBER 8

12:30 Students' Luncheon (Special Program).

SATURDAY AFTERNOON, NOVEMBER 8

2:00 The Country Church in Relation to the Problem of Today—Prof. Walter Burr, Manhattan, Kans.
The Students' Responsibility.
Discussion.

SATURDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 8

Dinner Session

6:00 Women Students—"Farm Women and Religion."
Men Students—Topic to be selected.

OPENING OF GENERAL CONFERENCE
New Southern Hotel

SATURDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 8

8:00 The President's Address—Dr. Kenyon L. Butterfield, President of Michigan Agricultural College, East Lansing, Mich.
Committee Assignments, Notices, etc.
Church Growth and Rural Prosperity—L. J. Taber, Master of the National Grange.
The Human Values of Country Life—Bishop Francis J. McConnell of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

SUNDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 9

8:30-9:00 Introduction and Discussion. Analysis of the Topic, Religion in Country life.—Harrison Elliott, Union Theological Seminary.
9:00-9:45 Group Discussions.
9:45-10:30 General Session continued.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON, NOVEMBER 9

3:00 General Session—Discussion Continued—Harrison S. Elliott, Union Theological Seminary, Chairman of Discussion.
The Culture of Rural Religion—E. C. Lindeman, High Bridge, N. J.
What is the Matter with the Rural Church?—Walter Burr, Manhattan, Kans.
The Next Decade in Rural Church Progress—Edmund de S. Brunner, New York, N. Y.
To What Extent do the Social Ideals of Religious Institutions in America Apply to Agriculture?—Edwin V. O'Hara, Eugene, Oregon.

SUNDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 9

Chamber of Commerce

8:00 A Great Musical and Inspirational Demonstration in Charge of the Leaders at Columbus—Dr. W. O. Thompson, President of the Ohio State University, speaker, and others.

MONDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 10

9:00 General Conference Discussion Continued. Consideration of Proposals for Improvement—Harrisons Elliott, New York, Chairman of Discussion.
11:20 Committee Report on Rural Education—Ernest K. Burnham, Kalamazoo, Mich.
Committee Report on Rural Organization—Walter Burr, Manhattan, Kans.
Nominating Committee Report and other Business.
Noon Recess.

MONDAY NOON, NOVEMBER 10

12:30-2:00 Special Luncheons for Committees and Groups.

MONDAY AFTERNOON, NOVEMBER 10

2:30-5:00 Sectional Conferences—Proposals for Improvement.

MONDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 10

8:00 General Conference Discussion Continued.
Executive Secretary's Report and other Business.
Committee Report on Communications and Transportation—Geo. H. Von Tungeln, Ames, Ia.
Committee Report on Rural Social Welfare—Le Roy Ramsdell, New York, N. Y.
Committee Report on Home-Making—Ilena M. Bailey, Washington, D. C.

TUESDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 11

9:00 General Conference.
Child Labor in Agriculture—Julia C. Lathrop, Rockford, Ill.
Report of Committee on Social Ideals of the Rural Church—A. E. Holt, Chicago, Ill.
10:00 Sectional Conferences: Ways and Means of Helping Religious Life in the Country.

TUESDAY NOON, NOVEMBER 11

12:00-1:30 Special Luncheons for Committees and Groups.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, NOVEMBER 11

1:30 Final Results of the Work of the Conference—The Ways and Means of Helping Religious Life in the Country.

4:15 Meeting of the American Country Life Association.
Some important proposals to be presented by the Executive Committee for the larger usefulness of the Association.
Report of the Treasurer.
Reports of Special Committees.
Miscellaneous Business.
Recess.

TUESDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 11

Annual Conference Dinner

7:00 Special Program.
The Welfare of the Child in Agriculture—Julia C. Lathrop, Rockford, Ill.
The Americans at the Agricultural Institute at Rome—O. E. Bradfute, President of American Farm Bureau Federation.
Country Church Progress in Canada—A. MacLaren, Sec'y-Treas. of Ontario Rural Community Life Movement.
The Significance and Interpretation of the Conference to Rural Religion —Albert E. Roberts, Secretary, Town and Country Department of the National Y. M. C. A. Council.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

The permanent functioning factor of the American Country Life Association is its system of standing committees. It is the aim of the Association to have specialists appointed to these various committees who will devote attention and study to the subject matter with which each respective committee is concerned. The reports of these committees constitute a continuous critique of the social phases of American country life.

I. COMMITTEE ON RURAL GOVERNMENT AND LEGISLATION

II. COMMITTEE ON RURAL ORGANIZATION

Chairman, Walter Burr, Kansas State Agricultural College, Manhattan, Kansas.
Charles J. Galpin, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.
Nat T. Frame, Director of Extension, Morgantown, W. Va.
E. L. Morgan, University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo.
Edwin C. Johnson, Dean of Agricultural College, Pullman, Wash.
Elwood Mead, Department of Interior, Washington, D. C.
Dwight Sanderson, Rural Social Organization, Ithaca, N. Y.

III. COMMITTEE ON COUNTRY PLANNING

Chairman, Frank A. Waugh, Massachusetts Agricultural College, Amherst, Mass.
John W. Gregg, University of California, Berkeley, Cal.
Arthur W. Cowell, Department of Horticulture, State College, Pa.
George B. Dealey, Manager, *Dallas News,* Dallas, Tex.

IV. COMMITTEE ON TEACHING OF RURAL SOCIOLOGY

Chairman, John H. Kolb, Department of Economics, College of Agriculture, Madison, Wis.
George H. Von Tungeln, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, Ia.
Miss Rosamond Root, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, N. Y.
H. A. Bone, Illinois State Normal University, Normal, Ill.
E. S. Bogardus, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, Cal.

V. COMMITTEE ON RECREATION AND SOCIAL LIFE

Chairman, A. G. Arvold, State College of Agriculture, Fargo, N. D.

VI. COMMITTEE ON RELIGIOUS LIFE AND ACTIVITIES

Chairman, ————
Edwin L. Earp, Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, N. J.

R. A. McGowan, National Catholic Welfare Conference, Washington, D. C.
R. A. Adams, Rural Church Field Worker, Lansdale, Pa.
C. M. McConnell, Board of Home Missions and Church Extension, Methodist Episcopal Church, 740 Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois.
Warren H. Wilson, Presbyterian Board of National Missions, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.
A. W. Taylor, 821 Occidental Building, Indianapolis, Indiana.
Edwin V. O'Hara, National Catholic Welfare Conference, Eugene, Oregon.
Albert E. Roberts, National Y. M. C. A., 347 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y.
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APPENDIX

RESULTS OF TESTS ON OPINIONS ON RELIGION IN COUNTRY LIFE

Prepared by Goodwin P. Watson
Union Theological Seminary

I. Study of States

The tests were given to the persons present at the opening session of the Conference, and the results on Part II of the test were studied to obtain some idea of the differences of opinion existing within the group. Part II contains twenty-five statements and it was found that within the ninety-one papers received there were persons who felt that no sincere person could believe the statement true, and others who felt that no sincere person could believe the statement false on twenty-three of the twenty-five issues. Evidently there were very real and serious differences of opinion when the group gathered and the tests were an expression of some, at least, of these differences.

The next problem was to find out which of the issues were most likely to represent widespread differences of opinion. The following were selected as being issues upon which a considerable group were at one extreme while a fair number of persons were at the other extreme. At the left of each is indicated the number of persons who voted 2, indicating their belief that no one who had a fairly good understanding of the subject could sincerely and honestly believe it false, and the number who voted minus 2, indicating their belief that no one who had a fairly good understanding of the subject could sincerely and honestly believe it true.

Persons Voting 2	*Persons Voting—2*	
22	7	Denominational churches constitute a serious handicap to rural community progress.
7	36	The church will serve the country best if it confines itself to its distinctively religious task.
33	6	Church boards which subsidize churches in rural communities where other churches exist are wasting their money.
9	16	The average country minister is well above the average of his community, so far as learning and good judgment are concerned.
16	11	In their effect upon character traits of boys and girls, the church and Sunday School training has been more potent than the chores and other activities of farm life.
12	11	The farmers' community church, cut off as it is from denominational relationships, is likely to fail in the long run.
22	16	Preaching is one of the most effective ways of leading people to live better lives.
31	10	The country church retards rural progress by its weight of tradition and authority.

Persons Voting 2	*Persons Voting—2*	
17	10	The freedom and stability of the farmer's position should make the farmers the most satisfied group in American life.

Quite as significant was the information which came on the study of the issues on which there seemed to be no very great difference of opinion. The following list of issues, a vote on extremes recorded in the left-hand margin, shows that this convention was composed of persons who were very strongly convinced that only one point of view could be held on the question.

Persons Voting 2	*Persons Voting—2*	
41	1	The best thing which could happen for the development of the country would be a revival of real religion.
1	22	Farmers' organizations surpass the church in moral principles and socially useful activities.
0	72	The coöperative movement in the country can furnish everything the church can furnish and do it better.
25	3	The most fundamental need for the farmer is a better organization of his economic relationships.
0	43	The modern coöperatives are similar in many respects to Russian Sovietism.
62	1	To be most useful, coöperative organizations among farmers should welcome the backing of the churches, but should be organized and should function independently.

These findings were of very immediate value to the leaders of the conference discussions. They had been told that the conference would be composed of persons who differed very widely on the usefulness of the church in country life, and many of whom felt that the coöperatives could supply a spiritual dynamic which might fill the need left by the waning influence of the church. The leaders had done their preliminary thinking, reading and outlining of possible discussions on such an assumption. The test quite evidently showed that this was not the case. Contrary to expectations, the convention seemed to be almost unanimous in feeling that the church was a vital organization in country life, and that economic organizations and social organizations, while useful, could never begin to touch the real function of the church. In accord with these findings, the plans for the discussion were remade. The conference proceeded to try to integrate its opinion at the point at which real differences existed. The change in response on the part of the delegates was so marked as to be noticeable to those who had no idea as to what the reason for the shift had been.

II. Shifts in Opinion

The tests were used in the second place to afford a study of the changes of opinion which took place during the conference. This study is not as complete as it should have been, for two reasons. The first is that the tests were made up on the basis of a misapprehension with regard to the issues which would be most vital in the minds of the delegates. Some of the changes in preaching program and religious education which were most significant in the minds of the delegates were not included at all in the test

blanks. The second difficulty was that only thirty-three papers were returned at the end of the conference, and of these thirty-three only twenty-two had names which could be identified with names on papers turned in at the beginning of the conference. The study of changes of opinion was therefore restricted to a study of the changes taking place in twenty-two individuals upon issues some of which were only very indirectly touched and some of which did not come up for discussion at all. Taking the test as a whole, changes of opinion took place on the average of 14% of the items or about one in seven.

In Part I, the Word Cross Out Test, the following words were quite largely crossed out at the beginning of the conference, but were not crossed out at the close:

Tenant farming
Sunday amusements
Priest

The latter two seemed to have some direct relationship to Father O'Hara's talk on Sunday afternoon. The first word was probably less annoying at the close of the conference, simply because it had been ignored in the discussion and by comparison had come to rankle less in the minds of the delegates than some words which were frequently involved in the discussions. The words which were most frequently crossed out at the close of the conference, and which had not been crossed out at the beginning, were:

Blood atonement
City

In Part II, the Degree of Truth Test, a change of opinion from zero to one, or from one to two, or from one to zero, or from — 2 to — 1, was regarded as one step in the positive direction. If the change took place in the opposite direction, it was regarded as a minus change. The following are the statements with regard to which the largest shifts of opinion took place, with the average amount of change per person indicated after each. Obviously, those with a plus sign would be statements which the persons came to feel truer and truer as the conference went on, those with a minus sign would be statements which they came to regard as more and more untrue.

Denominational churches constitute a serious handicap to rural community progress. + .3

The church will serve the country best if it confines itself to its distinctively religious task. — .6

The most fundamental need for the farmer is a better organization of his economic relationships. — .3

The farmers' community church, cut off as it is from denominational relationships, is likely to fail in the long run. — .4

The concentration of churches, corresponding to the concentration of schools, is a desirable thing in the country. + .4

The modern coöperatives are similar in many respects to Russian Sovietism. — .3

The Christian Church acts as an opiate, tending to make the farmer contented with detrimental conditions in the country. + .3

The freedom and stability of the farmer's position should make the farmers the most satisfied group in American life. + .8

The young man who said "If Christianity is not interested in more efficient agriculture and the improvement of social conditions in the country, then I am not interested in Christianity," was speaking in the spirit of Jesus. — .3

On certain other issues there were wide changes of opinion, but there were about as many who came to feel them more certain at the end as there were who came to believe them more false at the end. Among these were:

"Farmers organizations surpass the church in moral principles and socially useful activities."

"Church boards which subsidize churches in rural communities where other churches exist are wasting their money."

On Part III, the Arguments Test, the shifts of opinion were very slight. On only the one following argument, dealing with the Child Labor Amendment, did a majority of three or more persons change their rating:

"It is better to let the children work because some mothers and fathers need their children's wages to support the family decently."

Five changed from strong to weak, and one from weak to strong.

III. Shifts in Prejudice

These tests are modeled on tests which have been validated by a considerable mass of evidence as tests of prejudice in contrast to fair mindedness. When scoring to register prejudice only very extreme statements or the piling-up of all of the arguments on one side of the question as extreme and on the other side as weak, and similar inconsistencies of thought are counted. Thus it came about that while opinions were changed on one issue out of seven, on the average the delegates changed their prejudices on only one item out of each seventy. As might have been anticipated within the brief limits of time and upon these issues which were really not the focal points in discussion, there were practically no shifts in prejudice. The thirty-three papers which were turned in at the end were compared with sixty papers selected from the ninety-one turned in at the beginning. This was done to make sure that thirty was a fair sampling. It soon became evident that there were practically no differences between the first thirty, the second thirty, and the third thirty in the ninety-one papers coming in at the beginning. The sixty and thirty-three which were finally compared included at least twenty-two on which we could be certain that the person filling out the second paper was the same as the person who filled out the first.

Considering the test as a whole, the delegates at the beginning of the conference took 34% of the chances in the test to register a prejudice. At the close of the conference they took 34% of the chances to register prejudice. Where one person gave way on a few points of prejudice, some other person augmented his score. When the various forms of the test were scored separately, there was evident a very slight decrease in the prejudice shown in the Word Cross Out Test and a slight increase on the other two tests. Using just the twenty-two pairs of papers which could be definitely identified, there was evident a slight increase of prejudice from 34.3% at the beginning to 36.1% at the end. This came about largely in Part II, The Degree of Truth Test. It took the form of increased prejudice in favor of general country improvement and favoring the capitalistic economic point of view. However, these changes are probably insignificant, averaging only about 1% per paper. The per cent of prejudice at the beginning and at the end on the test as a whole, and on the various forms of the test, is given in the following table. There is also indicated in this table

the per cent of prejudice which would be in agreement with certain typical positions on the issues involved, such as the fundamentalist versus the religious radical, capitalist versus the economic radical, the backward agriculturist versus the radical reformer of country life. These likewise indicate no changes in prejudice which seem large enough to be of any significance. They do indicate that the personnel of the conference as a whole, while having some persons who were prejudiced in each direction, tended to be more liberal than conservative upon religious, economic and agricultural ideas.

CHANGES IN PREJUDICE

	Average Per Cent of Prejudice Registered at Beginning	*Average Per Cent of Prejudice Registered at End*
On the Test as a Whole	34%	34%
On Part I The Word Cross Out Test	26%	24%
On Part II The Degree of Truth Test	42%	44%
On Part III The Arguments Test	13%	17%
Prejudice in the direction of orthodox fundamental religion	8%	7%
Prejudice in the direction of liberal or radical religious ideas	13%	12%
Prejudice in the direction of the capitalistic economic point of view	7%	8%
Prejudice in the direction of liberal or radical economic ideas	17%	16%
Prejudice in the direction of backward, conservative points of view on rural life	5%	5%
Prejudice in the direction of general rural progress	12%	12%

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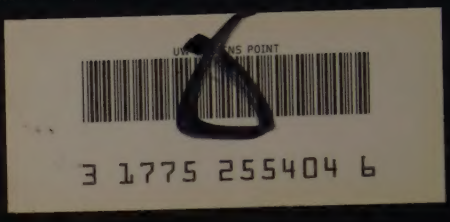
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